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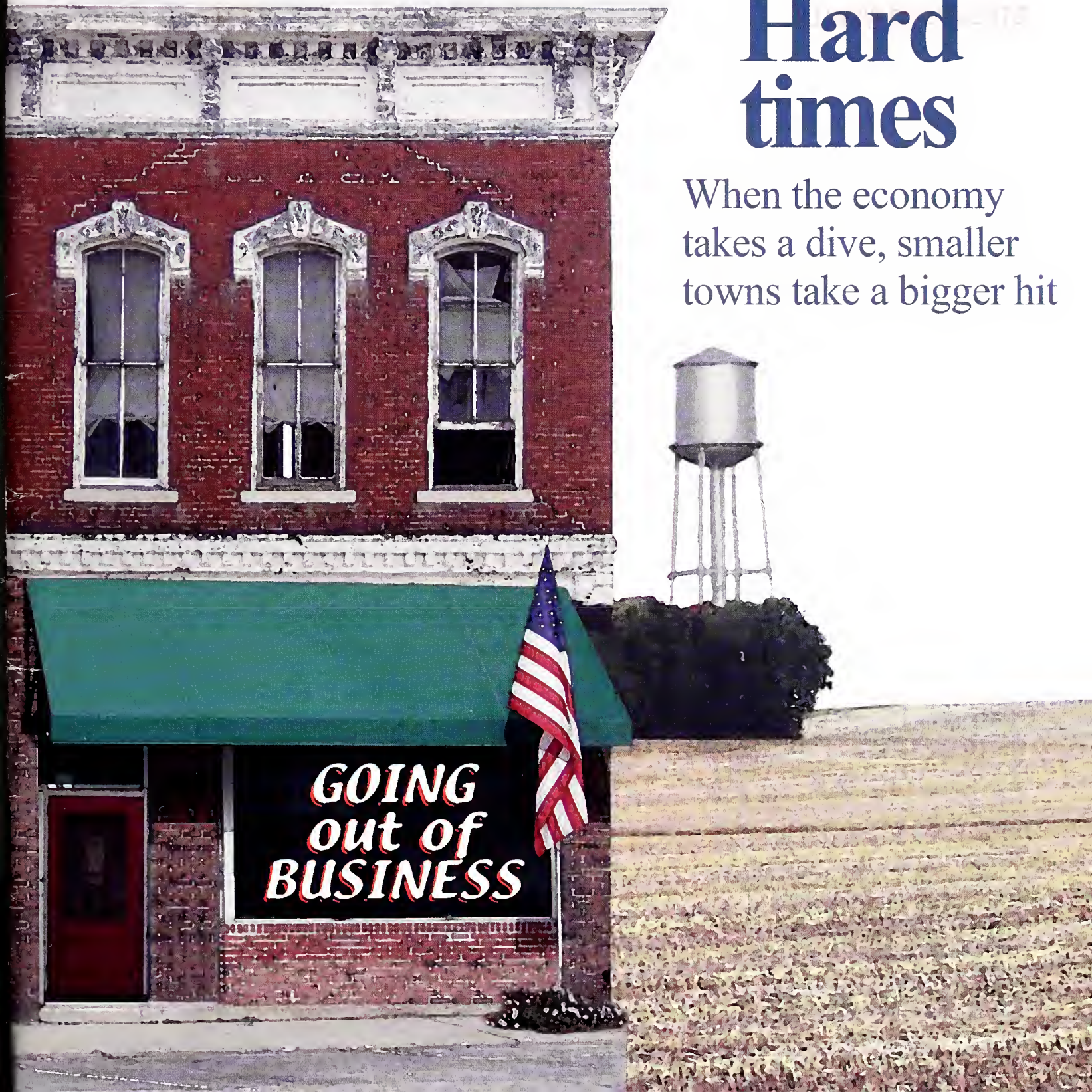
Illinois Issues

November 2004 \$3.95

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Hard times

When the economy takes a dive, smaller towns take a bigger hit



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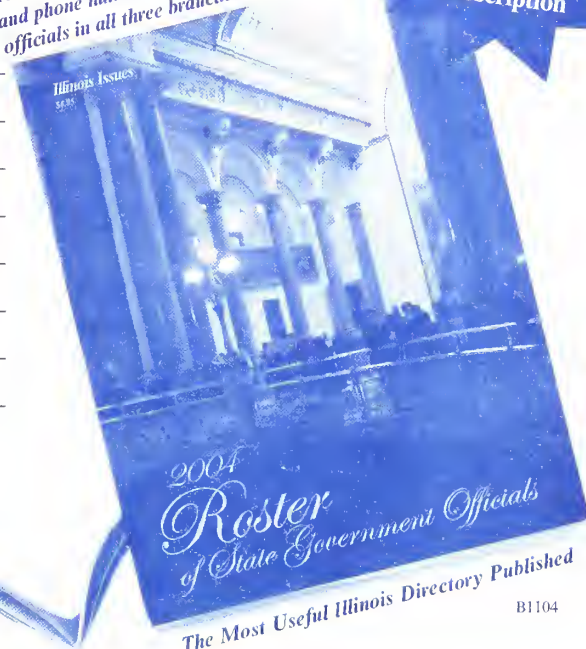
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Peggy Boyer Long



Economic incentives cost but few officials can afford to turn their backs on jobs

by Peggy Boyer Long

The late state Sen. Aldo DeAngelis may have put the matter most succinctly. In the summer of 1989, he was listening none-too-patiently to criticism of the state's decision to grant Sears, Roebuck & Co. a \$61 million financial incentive package, sweetened by tax breaks and development benefits, when the company threatened to move its Merchandise Group to North Carolina or Texas. Critics, we reported then, were suggesting to the Legislative Audit Commission that Sears might have snookered the state out of a good deal of public cash. Finally, DeAngelis, a Republican who hailed from Olympia Fields, exploded in frustration.

"I guess," he said, "you could have said to Sears, 'suck wind,' and see what happened."

That July, Sears represented only the most recent example of what at the time was a national trend: competition among the states to package financial deals aimed at attracting and keeping businesses — along with jobs and tax revenues.

In fact, the bipartisan commission had scheduled that summer's meeting to review a critical audit involving economic incentives granted to another company: Diamond-Star Motors, now a division of Mitsubishi. Then-Auditor General Robert Cronson had just issued

a scathing examination of the agency responsible for building Illinois' business climate. Cronson charged that the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs — recently renamed the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity — had an incoherent policy for offering financial subsidies, gave some companies incentives they didn't need and overestimated the number of jobs that could be created. As for the Diamond-Star deal, Cronson charged the state had shelled out \$86,669 in public funds for each job created at the Normal plant, far exceeding the agency's own guideline of \$5,000 per job. For his part, the agency director at the time, Jay Hedges, countered that it was closer to \$29,000 in public funds for each job — a price he believed worth paying to land the 2,800 jobs promised by the joint venture between Chrysler Motors Corp. and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. of Japan.

But Cronson had a larger point. Capital subsidies given to individual companies, he concluded, "raise issues of both equity and public purpose." Why, in other words, should some companies get such public benefits and others not? How does the state decide?

In a sense, DeAngelis' response was that large companies threatening to relocate to states prepared to offer better

deals have Illinois officials over a barrel. He was asking a more fundamental question: Can Illinois, and the state's municipalities, risk *not* offering financial subsidies? Can elected officials afford to turn their backs on potential jobs?

Through the past decade and a half, though the heyday of "smokestack chasing" is behind them, state officials continued to wrestle with this issue — and continued to provide public subsidies to private enterprises in an effort to boost economic development.

Sometimes a deal was designed, in part, to bolster the state's sense of itself or to lubricate an already functioning economic engine. Jobs weren't the key to the state's desire to draw Boeing's headquarters to Chicago. Nevertheless, the aviation giant got \$52.5 million in tax breaks and other incentives. The state's share was nearly \$30 million with the city of Chicago kicking in the rest.

Sometimes a deal was designed, in part, to help an economically struggling region. The state distributed \$6.9 million, for instance, to support aquaculture through the Illinois Fish Farmers Cooperative in Pinckneyville and to back the co-op's fish processing plant — before pulling the plug on the failing enterprise. The co-op was unable to make a go of the processing plan. And, as of last spring, it had \$500,000 in outstanding

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debts and was trying to sell off equipment. Auditor General William Holland cited the Department of Agriculture for lax oversight.

Illinoisans haven't always won this gamble. Mitsubishi Motors is now sending out pink slips. More than 1,000. And, according to the *State Journal-Register* of Springfield, some of those laid-off workers have been on the job since late 1989 when state financial support was in full swing. Now the state is putting up \$1.5 million to help those employees laid off at Mitsubishi, as well as other dislocated workers.

Maytag Corp. won more than \$7 million in grants and loans, an effort to convince the company to keep its Galesburg plant. And local governments in Knox County threw in property tax abatements. Still, the company decided to shut operations in Illinois, meaning the loss of 2,000 jobs, some of which will be moved to Mexico. Last summer, Knox County State's Attorney Paul Mangieri was considering suing on behalf of local government bodies to recoup those abatements, according to the *Peoria Journal Star*.

And Motorola Inc. won \$36 million in state subsidies for a cellular phone manufacturing plant in Harvard before shutting operations there.

Last year, these moves inspired a state law aimed at holding firms that receive public subsidies accountable if they fail to follow through on promises. That was an idea the states were considering back in the 1980s, too. But former Gov. James Thompson told *Illinois Issues* at the time that contracts requiring companies to pay back the value of incentives if they fail or renege are "more show biz than reality." No corporation in America, he argued, can guarantee what its employment is going to be in five or 10 years. "We haven't," he said, "had enough bad experiences in Illinois economic development policy to be worrying about that as a priority at the moment."

To individual workers, and the communities where they reside, the bad experiences have mounted. Yet, if anything, the economic development issue has grown more complex, and the solutions less clear. As recently as a

decade ago, Illinois was competing with Indiana, say, or Texas, engaging in what was called "border wars." But those borders have expanded. Today, the state is competing with Mexico and China. And, while business was once buffeted by national economic shifts, it must increasingly contend with global economic forces that can defy most long-term planning. The fate of the Mitsubishi plant in Normal, for instance, is dependent on the company's volatile fortunes in Japan. In this context, can the state realistically hold a company's feet to the fire in Normal, Harvard or Galesburg?

Business is built to maximize profits. And that's what it does. So if the public sector wants to intervene in the free-market sector, there are inevitable risks. Getting it in writing is worth a try. But beyond efforts to mandate "corporate accountability," the record shows there's room for "government accountability." Two state auditors general have said as much.

Cronson's report on the state's role in economic development was the most comprehensive. He supported contracts when financial subsidies are given, and recovery if firms fail to comply with obligations. He also called for analyses of economic impacts and financial need. And he called for stronger oversight by the state. But he also suggested the General Assembly might want to eliminate subsidies to individual firms and concentrate development resources on programs that make Illinois a better place to do business for all firms.

We point to an encouraging step in this issue: a state-backed community and small business development program outlined by Stephanie Zimmermann. But a piece by Dori Meinert, noting the congressional rewrite of the corporate tax code, reveals elected officials' instincts.

So will government officials say "suck wind" anytime soon? Not likely. As we reported 15 years ago this month, not many politicians are eager to be spoilers when jobs and benefits for favored businesses are at stake. □

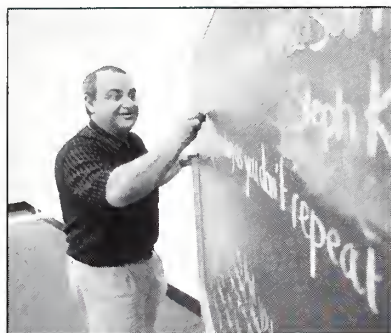
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Volume XXX, No. 11



Story problem, page 19



Gridlock USA, page 26



Hard times, page 16

FEATURES

- 16 **Hard times** by Stephanie Zimmermann
When the economy takes a dive, smaller towns take a bigger hit.

- 19 **Story problem** by Pat Guinane
If the budget is tight during a teacher shortage, how many dollars should the state devote to recruiting and retaining educators?

- 24 **Reflections** Progress lost? by Naomi B. Lynn
The former chancellor of the University of Illinois at Springfield critiques the status of public higher education.

- 26 **Gridlock USA** by Dori Meinert
No one has grand expectations for Congress in a presidential election year. But the highly charged partisan atmosphere this year has been especially frustrating.

- 29 **Q&A** Terry Peterson by Ed Wojcicki
Chicago Housing Authority CEO

- 32 **Retrospective** Three decades of public affairs journalism

Credits: The photo illustration on month's cover was designed by Diana L. C. Nelson.

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DEPARTMENTS

- 3 **EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK**
Officials won't turn their backs.
by Peggy Boyer Long
- 6 **STATE OF THE STATE**
Veto-session fixes are long-shots.
by Pat Guinane
- 8 **BRIEFLY**
- 34 **PEOPLE**
- 37 **ENDS AND MEANS**
Transit leaders hope for help
by Charles N. Wheeler III

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Patrick J. Guinane



Gambling on a veto-session fix is risky with so many old stakes still at the table

by Pat Guinane

Once again, November presents legislators with a cornucopia of issues steeped in urgency. And, as in past years, lawmakers say it will be the leftovers that fill their plates on six session days this month.

Last year, major policy overhauls spilled into the fall session as legislators rewrote death penalty and government ethics reform packages. This year, old business is again on the agenda.

Chicago and struggling suburbs still seek the budget boost new casino licenses would bring. Doctors still want relief from medical malpractice liabilities. And, though it took an extra two months to craft a state spending plan this summer, budget haggling isn't over.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich still wants bonds to build roads and schools, which promises to revive the strange political coalition forged last summer. It was conceived after House Speaker Michael Madigan found his budget ideals incongruent with those of fellow Chicago Democrats Blagojevich and Senate President Emil Jones. On the capital budget, Madigan remains in step with Sen. Frank Watson and Rep. Tom Cross, the Republican leaders in their respective chambers.

"I think that there'll be a study of everyone involved of how we go about selecting capital projects," says Madigan spokesman Steve Brown. "Once again, I'm sure Sen. Jones and his staff will be

Chicago and struggling suburbs still seek new casino licenses. Doctors still want relief from medical malpractice liabilities. And, though it took an extra two months to craft a state spending plan this summer, budget haggling isn't over.

invited to participate, as they were in the spring budget negotiations."

Actually, such conversations are compulsory. Among the 59 written budget agreements leaders signed in July was a promise to continue discussions on Blagojevich's Opportunity Returns, a regional economic development plan that would require \$2 billion in bonds over five years. Last spring, the governor also wanted \$2.2 billion in bonds to build and repairs schools over four years.

"In both the case of roadwork and school construction, the legislature was being asked to expand programs without funding sources, which from

our perspective was unprecedented," Brown says. "So, that's why those things were all slowed down."

With the November 2 election taking precedence over the November 8 veto session, it's doubtful discussions have accelerated enough to expect a capital plan this month. The topic could again dominate debate, but issuing that much debt requires GOP votes.

Blagojevich began announcing Opportunity Returns road projects a year ago, but still has not hinted at how road money would be spent in Chicago, the suburbs and wide swaths of central Illinois. Further, he hasn't suggested a way to repay the debt. Then-Gov. George Ryan raised vehicle fees and a litany of other charges to support his \$12 billion Illinois First capital plan. Blagojevich has not identified a funding source for his road program or his school construction plan.

"It takes political courage to do it," says Senate Republican Leader Frank Watson. "I'm willing to listen to whatever the governor suggests, but I'm not willing to pile more debt on top of what the governor has already established."

And Republicans feel there's still an old score to settle when it comes to Ryan's Illinois First. The program bought roads and whatever other local projects legislators deemed worthy, including a Waukegan statue of comedian Jack Benny. Such examples

were cited as wasteful spending when Blagojevich froze Illinois First money in early 2003. A recent *Rockford Register Star* analysis shows that Blagojevich has since released \$139 million in grants to individual legislators, but two-thirds of the money has gone to Democrats.

"A strange way to gain some sort of consensus is to poke a stick in our eye," Watson says. "And that's what they've done with the whole release of projects at this point."

So, even if a few carrots are added to the aforementioned stick, the Madigan-GOP coalition could still be a long way from signing off on a capital budget. And, because Blagojevich unsuccessfully moved to close three prisons last year, the status of existing state facilities likely will become part of the debate.

The lack of a new state construction plan may be the most painful reminder of the spring's record-long overtime session, but it's not the only issue still at large.

Medical malpractice reforms remain stalled as the GOP continues to seek caps on plaintiff awards for pain and suffering, a nonstarter for the Democrats, just as it was back in May. Blagojevich appointed former Cook County judge Donald O'Connell as mediator in the dispute, but partisans don't anticipate an agreement to materialize this month.

Another recurring issue is casino gaming. Senate President Jones pitched the idea last spring, advancing legislation that would have put new casinos in Chicago, the south suburbs, Rockford and Waukegan while allowing horse racing tracks to install slot machines and video poker. Blagojevich balked at a Chicago casino, and Republicans were bothered by Mayor Richard Daley's insistence that his city own the license.

Not much has changed since, though a group of business and labor representatives are backing the casino as a fix for Chicago's sagging convention industry. And proponents can always point to yawning revenue gaps for the state and the city. Jones still wants licenses for Chicago and the south suburbs, but it's not clear whether they'll get much discussion in this session.

And let's not forget why the short November term is called a veto session. Gov. Blagojevich vetoed just 31 bills this year, a byproduct of an overtime session

The lack of a new state construction plan may be the most painful reminder of the spring's record-long overtime session, but it's not the only issue still at large.

when minute budget details and lots of unrelated legislation were brought to the bargaining table. The governor used his veto pen on only 8 percent of the legislation he received, down from 16 percent last year, when lawmakers sent him 330 more bills.

In fact, legislators already threw out two Blagojevich vetoes while they were in Springfield waiting on budget negotiations last summer. And none of the remaining vetoes involve the budget.

The most contentious veto involves legislation that allows a court to ignore municipal handgun bans in cases where a citizen brandished a handgun in self-defense. It's known as the "Wilmette bill" for the northern suburb where a homeowner was charged with violating a handgun ban after he shot a burglar. Lawmakers overwhelmingly approved the legislation last spring and five senators or 20 representatives would have to change their minds for an override vote to fail this month.

And after the federal ban expired in September, Blagojevich said he would push for a state ban on semiautomatic assault weapons in the veto session. However, he cautions, "the political difficulty of that in Illinois is comparable to what it is in Washington, because Illinois is a microcosm of America."

Republicans say he should wait. "An assault-weapons ban — just logistically speaking — I don't think that could happen in a six-day session," says House Republican Leader Cross.

Meanwhile, several downstate Democratic senators will be eager to support the "Wilmette bill."

Legislators also will debate what

security measures should be added at the Capitol, a response to the September murder of an unarmed guard. Secretary of State Jesse White has presented lawmakers with a plan that requests metal detectors, checkpoints at Capitol parking lots, additional security cameras, more armed officers on the payroll and bullet-proof vests for all guards. That could mean a supplemental spending bill and a chance for other interests to request more state support during the veto session.

A supplemental appropriation was approved last year, but only after Democrats removed what Republicans had labeled pet projects. This was after Blagojevich said lawmakers were spending like "drunken sailors" when they attempted to rescind some of his budget cuts. There are no cuts to restore this year.

This year, the Chicago Transit Authority says massive service cuts loom if the General Assembly doesn't find the agency another \$82.5 million this month. This puts the CTA at odds with suburban officials who don't want to see their transportation dollars diverted.

Chicago's desperate plea for a budget bailout last November had to wait until January, as political wrangling meant Democrats could not get enough votes for the city's early retirement legislation. Chicago is still short on cash, which is why Mayor Daley wants a city-owned casino. The city may need to renew its petition next year, as will countless others counting on a veto-session fix from Springfield.

"There's a fair level of clamor," says Brown, Madigan's spokesman. "You just talk to people. There's always clamor and there's these bursts of, 'Oh, we think this is going to happen and not happen.' My experience is, if you listen to all that, at the end of the day, it doesn't usually come together."

Republicans, too, say they'll be inundated with requests, but shrug off the ubiquitous sense of immediacy.

"Oftentimes there's a lot of build up and a lot of discussion to do this, this and this and nothing happens," says House Republican Leader Cross. "It's tough to do anything of substance, really, starting from scratch in a veto session." □

Pat Guinane can be reached at capitolbureau@aol.com.

BRIEFLY

ENDANGERED PROPERTY

Historic North Shore estate may be seized

Meadows are rare in Chicago suburban neighborhoods. That is why the one designed by renowned landscape architect Jens Jensen in Highland Park earned the 17-acre property along Lake Michigan a spot on the National Register of Historic Places.

The 1984 register application called the A. G. Becker property significant because it was the last unthreatened large private estate laid out by Jensen in the Chicago area that retains the meadow, his hallmark landscape design.

The estate, though even more significant because of recent restoration efforts, is no longer free of threat. The current owner, Michael Segal, was convicted on federal charges of fraud, embezzlement and racketeering after prosecutors accused him of looting the insurance company he controlled. He faces sentencing in January. That leaves open the possibility that he may have to forfeit the property to settle accounts with the federal government. That, in turn, has preservation groups and the city of Highland Park anxious about potential subdivision of the valuable lakeside property.

"With the development pressure on the North Shore, it's very easily in danger," David Bahlman, president of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois, said when the group announced the addition of the Becker-Segal estate to their Chicagoland Watch List, a complement to its list of Ten Most Endangered Historic Places in the state. "It could be subdivided."

In addition to the Jensen landscape, the property includes a red brick Tudor Revival mansion designed in 1921 by Howard Van Doren Shaw, the architect of several other North Shore houses of early 20th-century wealthy Chicagoans. He designed the Highland Park house for Abraham G. Becker, who owned a brokerage firm and was one of the founders of the Standard Club. Shaw's other works include the Goodman Theater in Chicago and Lake Forest's Market Square, the nation's first drive-up shopping center.

The city of Highland Park, which would like to keep the property intact, is monitoring the federal forfeiture proceedings. City officials have not officially discussed a plan of action, says Larry Shure, head of Highland Park's planning department, but the city is concerned about any development that would be "inconsistent" with the Segal property or its neighborhood.

Beverley Scobell

Photographs courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois



The future of the historic Becker-Segal estate in Highland Park is uncertain because of property forfeiture proceedings linked to the recent federal criminal conviction of the property's owner, Near North Insurance executive Michael Segal.



For updated news see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>



List charts Chicago area's threatened historic places

An extended list of endangered architecturally significant properties in the Chicago area is a new focus for the Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois. It is meant to complement the group's Ten Most Endangered Historic Places, which it announces each March. Those on the Chicagoland Watch List are:

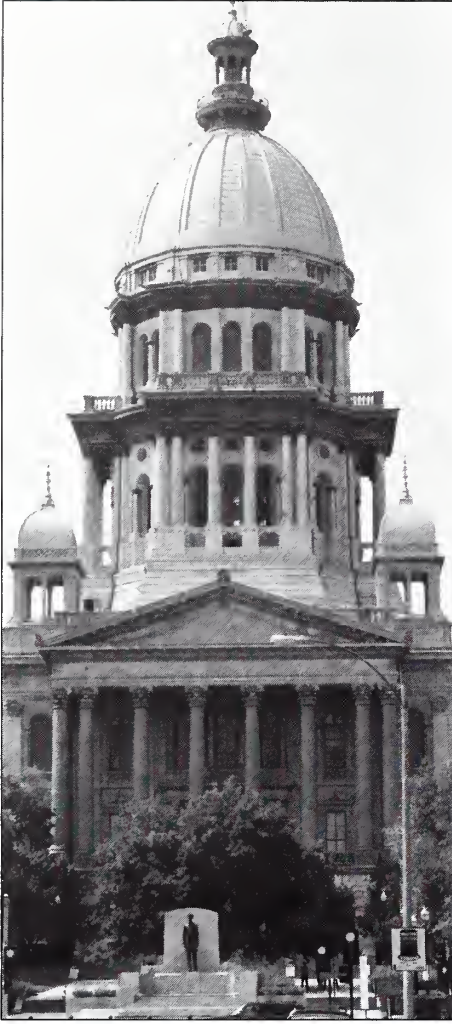
- Becker-Segal Estate
405 Sheridan Road, Highland Park
- *Daily News* Building Mural
400 W. Madison St., Chicago
- Hotel LaSalle Garage
215 W. Washington St., Chicago
- Judson Homestead
357 S. Main St., Oswego
- Kendall College block
Orrington Ave., Evanston
- Central Park Theater
3535 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago
- Gateway Theater
5216 W. Lawrence Ave., Chicago
- New Regal Theater
1641 E. 79th St., Chicago
- Patio Theater
6008 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago
- Uptown Theater
4816 N. Broadway St., Chicago
- New York Life Building
37-43 S. LaSalle St., Chicago
- River Forest Women's Club
526 Ashland Ave., River Forest
- Root-Badger House
326 Essex Road, Kenilworth
- Westinghouse High School
3301 W. Franklin Blvd., Chicago



The 17-acre property, which faces Lake Michigan, includes a 1921 Tudor Revival mansion designed by Howard Van Doren Shaw, whose other works include the Goodman Theater in Chicago.



The property of the Becker-Segal estate was designed by famed landscape architect Jens Jensen.



The legislature's fall veto session is scheduled to begin November 8 at the state Capitol.

Murder at the Capitol puts state leadership on alert

The fatal shooting of an unarmed security guard will alter the balance between access and security at the state Capitol.

"There has been an ongoing discussion here that actually preceded September 11 [2001] regarding the question of access to the Capitol and security for the people who work in and around the Capitol, as well as all the citizens of our state and other states who visit the state Capitol," Gov. Rod Blagojevich says. "That debate is now over."

Since the September 20 shooting, the governor and the legislative leaders have all expressed support for enhancing security measures. The details and how to pay for them likely will be debated in this month's fall veto session. Secretary of State Jesse White, manager of the Capitol complex and its security force, has sent leaders an initial plan. It requests metal detectors for the Capitol's three public entrances, guarded checkpoints for the parking lots surrounding the building, additional security cameras, body armor for all guards and more armed officers to support the Capitol's unarmed guards. In addition, Blagojevich has enlisted the help of consultants who worked with the U.S. Capitol Police after a 1998 shooting that killed two officers in the nation's Capitol Building. They toured the state Capitol and the James R. Thompson Center, the Chicago center of state government.

The day after guard William Wozniak, 51, was murdered, the governor penned an executive order authorizing the use of metal detectors in the Capitol and surrounding state offices in Springfield. There was never a prohibition against the use of metal detectors, but the General Assembly had been unwilling to pay for the equipment.

Given the nature of the attack, state officials now say a number of security options must be considered. "A metal detector would not have prevented the tragedy that took place [September 20]," White says.

The shooter was just inside the Capitol's north entrance when he fired the shotgun blast that killed Wozniak. Police say he drove unimpeded up a circle drive, parked just outside the Capitol steps, fired the fatal shot and drove off.

Derek Potts, a 24-year-old former University of Illinois at Springfield student, was charged with the crime. Potts' mother told the *Chicago Tribune* that he has been diagnosed with mental illness, including schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders. He was apprehended in Springfield on the morning of September 21, approximately 18 hours after the shooting.

Potts, a native of Olney in southeastern Illinois, was enrolled in criminal justice classes at the University of Illinois at Springfield. He dropped his classes the week before the shooting, around the time police believe he stole a shotgun from a Springfield Army surplus store. He allegedly returned to the store in search of an assault weapon about an hour before the fatal shooting.

While Capitol security guards are not armed, the secretary of state also employs an armed police force. Following the attack, armed officers were stationed at Capitol entrances and surrounding parking lots, as was temporarily the case following the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

Kae Warnock, a Statehouse security expert for the National Conference of State Legislatures, says the attack in Illinois is the first state Capitol shooting she has heard of in her 18 years on the job. However, in 2001, a man rammed a semi loaded with evaporated milk into the California Capitol at more than 50 mph, causing an explosion that scorched the building.

Warnock conducted a 2002 Statehouse security study that showed 17 state Capitols were equipped with metal detectors. Missouri has since removed its metal detectors, but still stations armed guards at the Capitol. Illinois was among 29 states that use barriers or bollards to restrict vehicle access. It also was among 28 states that restrict public access to their Capitols. The public is required to show a photo I.D. and sign a guest log.

Pat Guinane

QUOTABLE

“We’re defying federal regulations, not a federal law.”

Gov. Rod Blagojevich, as quoted by the *Chicago Sun-Times* when he announced *I-SaveRx*, a state-run plan allowing Illinois and Wisconsin residents to purchase pharmaceuticals from Canada, the United Kingdom and Ireland. Earlier this year, the governor's advisers told Illinois Issues that the state would not go forward with a plan until federal law allows it. According to the *Sun-Times*, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has indicated it may sue Illinois to clamp down on drug importation efforts.

Historic sheep barn needs a new owner

Photographs courtesy of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



This World War I-era sheep barn has been part of the University of Illinois' South Farms Animal Husbandry program for nearly 90 years, but the structure no longer matches modern research functions. The barn, designed by James White, a University of Illinois architect, qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Because of its historical significance, it was offered for sale to anyone who would dismantle and reassemble it at another location. A new building for the university's research park is scheduled to go up in place of the historic barn.

HISTORY LESSON

Road sign to point to New Philadelphia

A sign pointing travelers on I-72 to the gravesite of frontier settler Free Frank McWhorter will be unveiled next spring. Over the winter, organizers plan to make the site more inviting to visitors.

McWhorter, a former slave, founded the town of New Philadelphia in Pike County, about 35 miles southeast of Quincy. He was known as Free Frank after buying his freedom from a Kentucky slaveholder. After platting and selling lots in New Philadelphia, he bought the freedom of 16 other family members.

State Rep. Mary Flowers, a Democrat from Chicago, pushed to get a sign on the interstate designating the gravesite, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. "I think it is very important when people drive up and down Interstate 72, they have an opportunity to know who Free Frank was," says Flowers. "He made a very important contribution to this state and this country. His story is worth being told."

New Philadelphia existed for about 75 years, from 1826 to the end of the century, but was unincorporated in 1885 and went into decline after the railroad bypassed the town.

The former town gained national attention as archaeologists and other scientists excavated the site (see *Illinois Issues*, February 2004, page 8). The National Science Foundation awarded a \$226,500 grant for the research. The local New Philadelphia Association aims to connect the public to the story of one of Pike County's early pioneers.

Free Frank's history was recounted by his great-great-granddaughter, Juliet E. K. Walker, a history professor, in her book *Free Frank: A Black Pioneer on the Antebellum Frontier*. She had taught at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is now at the University of Texas in Austin.

The Illinois Department of Transportation will erect two brown historical road signs, one on either side of the Barry exit.

Beverley Scobell



Thousands attended last year's 50th Anniversary Farm Progress Show in Henning in Vermilion County. Similar crowds are likely to travel next year to Decatur, which was selected to host the show every other year on a "semi-permanent" basis.

FARM SHOW

Decatur chosen for agriculture's largest expo

Decatur will host the Farm Progress Show every other year. Next year's show will be held in late August in Decatur at a "semi-permanent" location near Richland Community College.

To attract the event, the Illinois General Assembly approved \$3.9 million in this year's Department of Transportation budget to upgrade roads around the college. The Farm Progress Show can draw more than 300,000 people and is expected to add more than \$10 million to the local economy. That deal calls for Decatur to alternate with an Iowa site for at least a decade, with the option to continue for another 10 years.

The Farm Progress Show is the nation's largest outdoor farm exhibition, showcasing agriculture's latest innovations in equipment, information and technology. The Carol Stream-based Farm Progress Companies, which publishes *Prairie Farmer* magazine in Decatur, last year announced it wanted to hold the show on permanent sites in Illinois and Iowa. It had previously alternated among Illinois, Iowa and Indiana.

The company made the move to reduce the risk of weather disruptions and to upgrade facilities for exhibitors and visitors. Last year, the 50th anniversary show was held in Henning in Vermilion County (see *Illinois Issues*, September 2003, page 12), not far from the site of the first Farm Progress Show. Heavy rains forced the company to cancel two days of the three-day event.

"That was the clincher," says company spokeswoman Rosemary Schimek. Show organizers had debated the idea for about five years, she says, and the company has a proven model in its Nebraska show, which has been successful on a permanent site for 27 years.

"The Illinois site is just everything we were looking for," she says. It is located on Interstate 72, with easy access to U.S. Route 51 and state Route 48. The site has 640 acres for exhibits and field demonstrations and more than 200 acres of established sod for visitor parking.

Richland Community College will close for the August 30 to September 1 run of the show, so that campus facilities will be available for seminars and other show-related events. The show was moved up a month at the request of exhibitors and visitors to avoid conflict with peak harvest days.

Beverley Scobell

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURE BY THE NUMBERS

- 21** Farm-related deaths in Illinois between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004 — fewest in a season in 25 years
- \$7.6 billion** Value of Illinois agricultural products sold, 2002
- 6** Illinois' ranking in ag sales
- 18.4 percent** How much the share of Illinois farms run by corporations declined, reversing a trend of growing corporate ownership that began in 1974
- 90 percent** Share of Illinois farms run by families
- 5,253** Number of women who are principal operators of an Illinois family farm, accounting for 27 percent of operators
- 366** Latino farm owners in Illinois in 2002
- 312** Latino landowner population in 1997
- 44 percent** Share of Illinois farms where a computer is used for business

SOURCES: *Country Insurance & Financial Services, U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2002 Census of Agriculture*

METH GUIDE

A legal reference for law enforcement

The University of Illinois at Springfield has joined the fight against methamphetamine. The Institute for Legal and Policy Studies at that campus has produced a legal reference guide for the growing number of Illinois law enforcement agencies that are encountering meth.

"The guide provides an opportunity for law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges from counties where meth has been prevalent for years to share their experience and expertise with counties that are just now beginning to experience clandestine lab cases," says Carol Esarey, the institute's interim director. The guide covers production, users, treatment, evidence collection and legal issues.

The Illinois attorney general's office will use the guide in a series of law enforcement seminars next year.

Law enforcement officers can request the guide on CD by contacting Illinois State Police Master Sgt. Bruce Liebe at (217) 785-6623 or liebebr@isp.state.il.us.

THE ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S CENTENNIAL AWARD PROGRAM

The Centennial Awards Program was established in 1984 to honor Illinois businesses, enterprises, institutions, and not-for-profits organizations operating continuously in the state for 100 years or more. The award celebrates longevity, as well as the economic, cultural, and civic contributions businesses make to their communities and state. More than 1,100 corporations have been inducted into the program, from Main Street barbershops and community service organizations to multi-billion-dollar industries.



INTERESTED?



Call the **Illinois State Historical Society** at (217) 525-2781 for a Centennial Award application, or visit our website at www.historyillinois.org. If you're in historic Springfield, stop by our offices at 210-1/2 South Sixth Street, Suite 200.

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- **Submit** a resume.

www.iasaedu.org/JobBank

A collaboration of the Illinois Association of School Administrators and the Illinois State Board of Education.

Clipfile

“American colleges and universities raise about \$25 billion a year from private sources. Public universities are new to this game, but they’ve learned that it’s where the action is. Private dollars now account for about 30 percent of the University of Illinois’ annual budget, about 20 percent of Berkeley’s and about 10 percent of Florida’s. In a sense, tuition-paying undergrads are now the loss leaders in the enterprise. What used to be the knowledge business has become the business of selling an experience, an affiliation, a commodity that can be manufactured, packaged, bought and sold. Don’t misunderstand. The intellectual work of universities is still going on and has never been stronger. Great creative acts still occur, and discoveries are made. But the *experience* of higher education, all the accessories, the amenities, the aura, has been commercialized, outsourced, franchised, *branded*. The professional manager has replaced the professor as the central figure in delivering the goods.”

James Twitchell in “Higher Ed, Inc.,” which appeared in the summer 2004 edition of Wilson Quarterly.

Twitchell argues universities are no longer in the business of transmitting cultural literacy. The real business, he contends, is being transacted in the development office.

“Development is both PR and fundraising, the intersection of getting the brand out and the contributions in, and daily it becomes more crucial. That’s because schools like mine have four basic revenue streams: student tuition, research funding, public (state) support, and private giving. The least important is tuition; the most prestigious is external research dollars; the most fickle is state support; and the most remunerative is what passes through the development office.”

Twitchell’s book, Branded Nation: The Marketing of Megachurch, College Inc., and Museumworld, was published this fall by Simon & Schuster. He is a professor of English and advertising at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

GROUP GRADES STATES

Illinois gets a D in college affordability

Measuring Up 2004 confirms what many students have already discovered. Access to college is not just about making the grade. The rising cost of college tuition may limit access to higher education. For that reason, the state of Illinois earned a near-failing grade in the area of college affordability, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education’s third biennial report card on higher education.

Based in Washington, D.C., the independent nonpartisan center grades all 50 states in six categories. Illinois’ D in affordability contrasts sharply with its grades in other areas: preparation for college, B+; participation in college, A; degree completion, B; and benefits of higher education, B-.

“The chances of young people in Illinois going to college have dropped by 13 percent in the last decade,” according to the report.

Continuing hikes could begin to adversely affect participation, says Richard Wagner of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Mean average annual tuition and fees for Illinois’ public universities was \$3,134 in 1994. In 2004, it is \$5,785, according to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

While higher education budgets have increased, the state has decreased its commitment to financially needy students. Decreases in need-based financial aid coupled with rising tuition costs may have a significant impact on families facing stagnant incomes and a lack of resources to supplement state awards.

The situation presents a policy challenge for Illinois. To address problems concerning rising college costs, the Student Assistance Commission and the Illinois Board of Higher Education conducted an analysis of affordability.

The commission has recommended that the state’s Monetary Award Program grant be fully funded to keep pace with tuition increases. “Although some noteworthy programs in the state were eliminated or saw funding cuts, financial aid was protected from those types of cuts,” says the commission’s Lori Reimers.

However, Leslie Defrates, associate director of Financial Assistance for the University of Illinois at Springfield, says students have seen a decrease in the award amount from the Monetary Award Program. “Rather than paying the students’ entire tuition and fee balance for the appropriate number of credit hours, a fraction is applied according to the students’ credit hours claimed.” This amounts to a 10 percent cut across the board for individual students, but now more students are able to receive state aid because the funds have been spread out.

Meanwhile, the Truth in Tuition law, signed by Gov. Rod Blagojevich in 2003, is designed to hold down college costs. As of this academic year, Illinois public universities will be required to fix tuition rates for first-year students over the course of their degree programs.

Rikeesha Cannon

TROUBLED PRISON

Staff wants warden moved

Union workers at Menard Correctional Center in far southwestern Illinois are clamoring for a new warden just four months after Charles Hinsley took over.

He became warden of the maximum-security prison in June, after Eugene McAdory Jr. was fired amid investigations of two inmate deaths — one a suicide, the other from hypothermia.

The American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees criticized Hinsley for not locking prisoners in their cells after an inmate struck a guard in July.

On a 492-42 vote last month, union members declared “no confidence” in Hinsley, asking the Illinois Department of Corrections to reassign him. The department says it will not replace Hinsley, an 11-year corrections employee.

ILLINOIS HEALTH BY THE NUMBERS

200	Workers killed on the job in 2003
190	Workers killed on the job in 2002
2002	When deaths at work hit a record low
1996	When deaths at work hit a record high
262	Number of deaths at work in 2002, record year
54	West Nile virus cases in 2004*
2	West Nile virus deaths in 2004*
884	West Nile virus cases in 2002
66	West Nile virus deaths in 2002
1,311	West Nile-infected mosquito pools*
227,12 and 1	West Nile virus cases in birds, horses and alpacas, respectively, in 2004*
31,369	All Illinois AIDS cases reported +
837	Illinois AIDS cases reported in 2004+
1,669	Illinois HIV cases reported in 2004
\$4.6 million	State traffic fine surcharge funds to trauma centers in 2004
\$93 million	Amount distributed through the trauma center fund since 1993

*as of October 15

+as of August 31

SOURCE: Illinois Department of Public Health

STATES' SPENDING

Medicaid expected to top education

Analysis is expected to show that in fiscal year 2004 states for the first time spent more on Medicaid than on schools.

A report by The National Association of State Budget Officers put Medicaid spending at 21.4 percent of all state spending in fiscal year 2003, nearly eclipsing elementary and secondary education spending, which was 21.7 percent.

Meanwhile, the group's report estimates that between fiscal year 2003 and fiscal year 2004, states' spending on Medicaid grew 8 percent, while education spending grew 6.4 percent. The report was based on actual 2003 expenses and estimated ones for 2004.

"States are faced with the same cost pressures that affect private insurance, such as double-digit increases in prescription drug costs and expanding medical services," states the recently released report.

WORKSHOP

THE THIRD HOUSE: Workshop on Legislative Lobbying

Presented by
Institute for Legislative Studies, Center for State Policy and Leadership
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THE THIRD HOUSE: *Workshop on Legislative Lobbying* is a day-long series of training workshops and lectures on how to lobby effectively in the Illinois General Assembly. Participants will receive vital information on lobbying ethics, strategy, tactics, and resources from experienced and successful lobbyists.

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Registration
limited to
40 participants.



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Hard times

When the economy takes a dive,
smaller towns take a bigger hit

by Stephanie Zimmermann

Photo illustration by Diana L. C. Nelson

The 6,300 citizens of Round Lake Park, a working class village near the Wisconsin border in far northern Lake County, have been affected by the recent economic slump just like everyone else in Illinois. They've watched jobs evaporate at nearby Baxter International and Motorola. They've seen fuel prices and health care costs go up. Some have put off needed repairs on their homes until finances look better.

No surprise, their town is in the same fix. About 99 percent residential with historically scarce business development, Round Lake Park has been tightening its budgets for the past several years. It has combined its police department with nearby Hainesville's to save money, and it has frozen wages of the village staff. But now, because it doesn't have the \$14 million required to upgrade its sanitary sewer system, the village is facing a potential environmental lawsuit by the state that could cost more than twice the village's entire annual budget.

In a rotten economy, this is the sort of thing that can drive a small town mayor to distraction.

"We're so used to stretching dollars, we just stretch them a little further," says Mayor Ila Bauer, a retired teacher who used to preside over high school business education classes. But the possibility of a big lawsuit is something altogether different, Bauer says. "I really don't know what we'd do. I absolutely don't know."

If it's any consolation to Mayor Bauer, Round Lake Park isn't alone in its

economic struggle. Municipalities of all sizes across Illinois are facing tough choices — and small towns are getting hit especially hard. The reasons are many: Those that aren't diversified economically get socked when a big employer shuts down. They have a smaller tax base, and their political leaders, loathe to raise taxes, find it hard to increase local revenue. And the state and federal dollars they receive have remained stagnant at best when inflation is considered.

"Very small municipalities just don't

have the options that larger municipalities do," says Rebecca Hendrick, an associate professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago who studies the fiscal condition of Chicago's suburbs.

Preliminary results from a survey by the Illinois Municipal League confirm the fiscal stress and belt-tightening going on in small — and even larger — municipalities. Earlier this year, the league surveyed 441 of its members with populations of 2,500 and higher and received 267 responses. The data was still being tabulated in mid-October,



but Joe Schatteman, research and information services coordinator, says about 85 percent of the towns reported having to take some measures to keep their most recent fiscal year budget in the black, either making cutbacks or finding additional revenue. Some held off buying a new police car, others postponed capital improvements or laid off city workers. Some chose to increase local sales taxes or utility taxes.

"They know that the economy was — or still is, depending on whom you talk to — not doing well," says Schatteman, who continues to analyze the data. "It almost seemed like it was really across the board."

Norman Walzer, an economics professor at Western Illinois University and director of the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, has been looking at these issues in down-state communities for the past three decades. He's seen many small towns boom as people working in larger areas trade a slightly longer commute for a cheaper home on a big piece of land. The down side, however, is that when companies in those larger towns lay off workers, the small towns where they live can face real trouble.

Take Mitsubishi Motors, for example, which recently laid off 1,200 people at its plant in Normal. "Those are people who probably came in from an hour or more

near Bloomington," Walzer says. The same goes for the small towns around Galesburg, where Maytag Corp. is laying off 1,000 people as it moves its refrigerator production to Mexico, and for the little towns around Sterling, where North-western Steel and Wire has closed down.

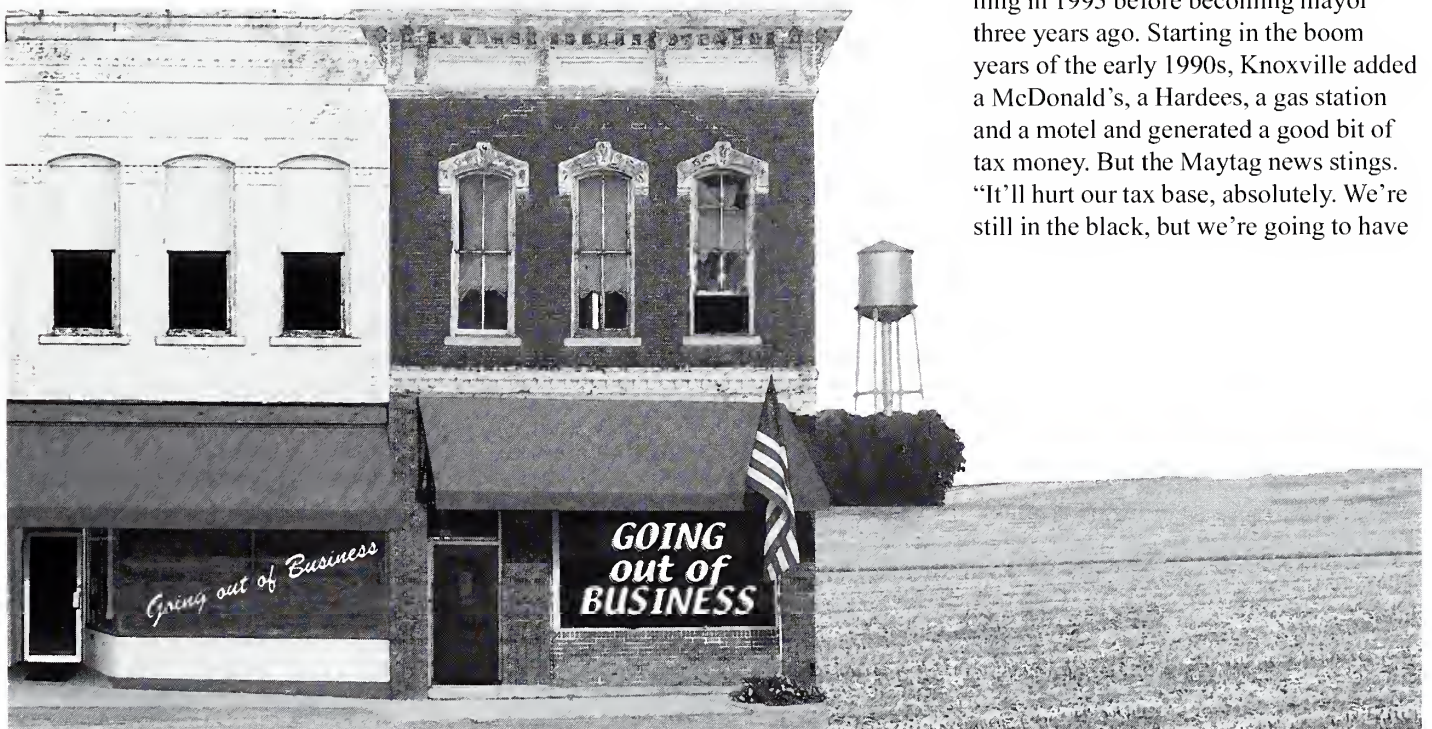
Last month, Walzer analyzed how much money municipalities across Illinois get from the state and federal governments, based on the most recent U.S. Census of Governments data, and the results are mixed. The data showed that state revenues to municipalities increased in dollar amounts from 1992 to 2002. But upon examination of a period that included a recession, 1997 to 2002, the spending power of those funds, after adjusting for inflation, shows an actual drop of 1.7 percent, from an average of \$211.05 per person in 1997 to \$207.41 per person in 2002. Per capita federal funding for municipalities, after inflation was considered, rose by 12.5 percent during the period from 1992 to 1997 — the economic boom years — but fell by 8 percent during 1997 to 2002, from an average of \$35.96 to \$33.09. Meanwhile, property tax receipts were down 7 percent on average between 1997 and 2002 when adjusted for inflation.

"During this last 10 years, in fact, the revenues available to the cities probably have been stagnant at best," Walzer says.

Medium-size towns have a better chance of rallying during a bad economic climate. In contrast, small towns can quickly see the businesses they do have evaporate. They may have only a part-time village staff that can't lasso the grant money and technical assistance they need to survive. "When you get a negative downturn or a negative spiral, it's really hard to reverse that," Walzer says. "One of the real difficulties with the really small towns is you don't have any staff."

The city of Knoxville, just southeast of Galesburg and about 38 miles northwest of Peoria, got hit by a huge punch this fall when Maytag began its latest layoffs of 1,000 workers on the heels of 600 jobs lost two years ago. The town of 3,100, with an estimated 1,575 people in its workforce, lost 99 Maytag jobs, or about 6.3 percent of its working population. And Butler Manufacturing, a Galesburg company that makes prefabricated metal buildings, has announced it will close its operations next year, putting more Knoxville residents out of work. That is on top of the generally poor economy nationwide and Knoxville's recent capital project to get water from Galesburg, for which it will be paying off nearly \$400,000 in loans for the next 20 years.

"We really haven't felt that much yet [from the Maytag closing]. I don't know what's down the road," says Mayor Phil Myers, who served as an alderman beginning in 1993 before becoming mayor three years ago. Starting in the boom years of the early 1990s, Knoxville added a McDonald's, a Hardees, a gas station and a motel and generated a good bit of tax money. But the Maytag news stings. "It'll hurt our tax base, absolutely. We're still in the black, but we're going to have



The same forces hitting municipalities downstate are hurting some Chicago suburbs, too, even though they aren't being brought to their knees by one factory closing.

to tighten up a bit.”

Despite the economic climate, Myers is upbeat about Knoxville's future. In some other towns, especially those with a long history of economic troubles, a few years of recession can knock them down. Like a person suffering psychological depression, an economic depression renders these towns unable to get up and turn themselves around.

The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs, together with the state's Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, has offered help with small business and community development for a sliding-scale fee to nearly 90 non-metro communities, mainly towns with fewer than 25,000 residents but many with less than 10,000. The institute's MAPPING program for nonmetropolitan groups brings together political, business and community leaders in an effort to determine a long-term vision and create local solutions.

Often it works. Other times it doesn't. One community Walzer declined to name was once a prosperous town with a foundry and access to a coal mine. Its economy in decline, the town tried to do a MAPPING project. But no one wanted to work on it, and the idea ultimately died.

The importance of strong local leadership and a common vision for the town shouldn't be underestimated, says Nancy Richman, who runs the program. “Communities that do well over time have somebody who's championing the cause,” she says — and it's not just the political leaders but the business people, educators,

clergy and activist citizens. “You have to have a sense of urgency. Change doesn't happen without a sense of urgency.”

Some towns see their industrial base die but reinvent themselves as a bedroom community. “They go through stages,” Walzer says. “What we have to do is catch them early enough in the cycle that we can help them ramp back up again.”

The same forces hitting municipalities downstate are hurting some Chicago suburbs, too, even though they aren't being brought to their knees by one factory closing. Some suburbs, through a combination of low property values, population declines and management problems, started out poor before the recession and have seen their situation worsen, says Hendrick, who teaches public administration at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Her research shows that up to 70 Chicago suburbs would face serious threats to their ability to provide basic public services if state-shared revenues, such as the income tax, the local use tax, the motor fuel tax and grants, were cut. Another 86 suburban communities would face difficult or painful choices. In 10 percent of Chicago's suburbs, state-shared revenues account for 30 percent or more of total revenues. If they're not home rule communities, these towns have fewer ways to raise revenue. And the smaller they are, the less likely they'll be able to do things such as cutting personnel to balance their books. “Those communities at the bottom of the baseline lists, they're so far in the hole. There's, in many cases, a history of poor management, poor politics. All of that has conspired against them,” Hendrick says.

Other towns are trying to be proactive. Abingdon, a city of 3,600 people south of Galesburg that is losing 132 jobs from Maytag, has a fund balance, and its long-term debt is nearly paid off. Its \$2 million operating budget contains very little “glitz,” says Mayor Michael Brackett, who works as a computer programmer at Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg, where, coincidentally, many former Maytag workers are taking classes to find a new career. “We've been frugal over the years,” Brackett says. “We're not doing great, but we're not doing bad.” And Brackett is looking to the

future. He recently attended a seminar on wind turbine systems and got a grant to study its feasibility in Abingdon. “When the state cuts back money and the economy is not that good and you can't raise taxes and Maytag closes down, you almost have to think outside the box and find alternate sources of revenue.”

A little farther south, in the picturesque hamlet of Havana — population 3,500 — just east of the Illinois River about midway between Springfield and Peoria, city leaders saw a similar need to do something more. In 1996, Havana joined with Western Illinois' Institute for Rural Affairs and undertook a MAPPING process that produced four key areas of development: a 125-acre “shovel-ready” business park; a downtown façade project that included structural rehabilitation and beautification with brick streets and decorative streetlights; a program to retain and expand local small businesses; and a tourism effort to take advantage of nearby natural lands and the Illinois River.

A huge part of that was getting the whole community involved, says Terry Svob, Havana's economic development coordinator. “No one person can make these things happen if the community isn't behind them,” Svob says. “I think the best is yet to come. I think we've laid the groundwork for things that are going to bear fruit for some time.”

Meanwhile, in Round Lake Park, the threat of a state lawsuit hasn't stopped Mayor Bauer and other village leaders from trying to firm up their economic future. This fall, the village hopes to break ground on a large townhouse development for people 55 and older that will include retail shops. A new 9,200-square-foot retail center also is in the works. In addition, a new lumber yard is moving into town, and officials are planning on revitalizing the Main Street area, says Matt McCleary, economic development director.

“I know that we're definitely very strapped for dollars these days,” says McCleary, who's looking forward to the tax dollars these new projects will bring. “The village will be infinitesimally better off and have a little bit of breathing room.” □

Stephanie Zimmermann is a reporter for the Chicago Sun-Times.

Story problem

If the budget is tight during a teacher shortage, how many dollars should the state devote to recruiting and retaining educators?

by Pat Guinane

Photographs courtesy of the Golden Apple Foundation



Dominic Belmonte, Golden Apple director of teacher preparation, instructs Golden Apple scholars at a summer institute at DePaul University in Chicago.

State budget cuts have threatened to take a bite out of Golden Apple teacher scholarships.

But while the governor has been seeking to eliminate funding for the highly regarded private program, the state is paying a collection agency to go after students who accepted competing

state-run scholarships then skipped out on commitments to teach in struggling schools.

Providing financial assistance to students who promise to teach in tough schools is at the core of Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois and the state's teacher scholarship programs. And for

more than a decade, lawmakers found the resources to fund both efforts.

After all, Illinois continues to face a scarcity of elementary and secondary teachers, especially in Chicago and other communities where poverty is high and student test scores are low. Even schools that can afford new hires have trouble

Financial aid for teachers

PROGRAM	AVAILABILITY	REQUIREMENT
Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois (private, state funded)	Four years of college \$7,000/year (\$5,000/school, \$2,000/summer training)	Teach five years at one of 2,500 Illinois schools with a high concentration of students from low-income families or at a school where at least 43 percent of students in one grade level failed multiple subjects on state exams.
Illinois Future Teacher Corps (state)	College juniors and seniors \$5,000 - \$15,000/year	Teach five years at any school. Recipients can get more money for teaching at one of the 2,500 low-income schools or for committing to a teacher shortage discipline. (Currently: early childhood, bilingual education, math, music, physical education, reading/English language arts and special education.)
Minority Teachers of Illinois (state)	College juniors and seniors: black, Hispanic, Asian or Native American \$5,000/year	For each year of scholarship, recipients must teach one year at an Illinois school with at least 30 percent minority enrollment.
Federal Perkins Loan	Students with financial need are eligible throughout college \$4,000/year undergraduate \$6,000/year graduate	Students can have their loans and interest forgiven if they teach five years at one of the 2,500 low-income schools in Illinois or teach in a shortage discipline. (Forgiveness rate: 15 percent year one and two; 20 percent in year three and four; and 30 percent in year five. Available in all states.)

attracting candidates. In October 2003, Illinois schools had 1,394 budgeted teaching posts they couldn't fill.

But it was against this backdrop that Gov. Rod Blagojevich moved to eliminate state funding for Golden Apple, a scholarship program that provides additional training and professional support for new teachers entering challenging classrooms. At the same time, he doubled funding for Illinois Future Teacher Corps, an existing scholarship program his administration renamed.

Officials at Golden Apple say the \$3.8

million in state support they received last year was well spent. In addition to financial support, it provides mentoring and additional training for 100 new students each year and another 300 already in college.

On the other hand, argues Dominic Belmonte, director of teacher preparation for Golden Apple, the Illinois Future Teacher Corps merely offers money. "It's a check-writing concept," he says. "What we do is ensure, as best we can, the investment [made] in these young people by increasing and strengthening

their preparation and by mentoring them, both while they're in college and when they start teaching."

Most Golden Apple scholars begin preparation right after high school, entering a six-week summer program, where they spend days assisting accomplished teachers and nights attending teacher preparation courses at DePaul University in Chicago.

Dakota Pawlicki, a freshman at Illinois State University in Normal, completed his first Golden Apple training session this summer, working at



Golden Apple scholars Afrika Honston of Belleville, Catherine Hwang of Buffalo Grove and Jennifer Strond of Markham study during a Golden Apple enrichment conference last August at Saint Xavier University in Chicago.

St. Patrick's High School in Chicago. The tuba player wants to teach music to inner-city students, and he says Golden Apple is giving him the grounding he won't get from college classes.

"They teach the ideal situation, not what to do when a kid gets up and throws a chair," Pawlicki says. "That's what Golden Apple is for."

While in college, Golden Apple scholars complete four summer institutes, receiving a \$2,000 stipend each year. They also receive \$5,000 annual scholarships during four years of college, provided they keep a C+ average and promise to teach in low-income or academically struggling schools for five years following graduation.

When looking for work, Golden Apple graduates can consult a list of 2,500 public, private and parochial schools in Illinois that have a high concentration of students from low-income families.

Or they can choose to teach at any public school where at least 43 percent of students in a single grade level are failing multiple subjects on state exams.

After graduates enter those environments, Golden Apple staff observe the teachers during their initial classroom years. The program offers professional development conferences each summer for graduates entering the field and current teachers who need to renew state certification.

Competing state scholarships administered by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission offer prospective teachers help with tuition, but don't supplement the teacher training already offered at Illinois colleges. The state scholarships are not available until a student enters the junior year of college. That assistance, strictly financial, ends at graduation.

Students selected for Illinois Future Teacher Corps receive \$5,000 for tuition

and room and board if they commit to teaching at any Illinois school for five years. Awards can double or triple for students who will teach in one of the 2,500 Illinois schools with a high concentration of low-income students and for those who specialize in math, special education and other subjects where the state has a teacher shortage. All recipients are obligated to teach for five years. Under past governors, the requirement was a commitment to teach one year for each scholarship year.

Recipients of low-interest federal college loans also can have their debt forgiven if they teach for five years in a low-income school or shortage discipline. This program is available across the country.

In Illinois, black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American students also can apply for Minority Teachers of Illinois

scholarships, which offer \$5,000 a year to juniors and seniors. For each year they receive the scholarship, recipients must promise to teach one year in a school with at least 30 percent minority enrollment.

Golden Apple competes for funding with these two state programs, but when it comes to quality, the foundation says, there's no contest.

"The things that we add to the people we select is just so much more than giving a check to a university on behalf of a young person in the hopes they'll become well-trained, resilient and able to withstand the challenges offered to them. That's the difference between our programs," says Belmonte of Golden Apple.

"That statement is unfair to the thousands of students who rely on the Illinois Future Teacher Corps scholarships," says Becky Carroll, spokeswoman for the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. "Not only do they have great financial need, but they've demonstrated a will to help children in underserved communities."

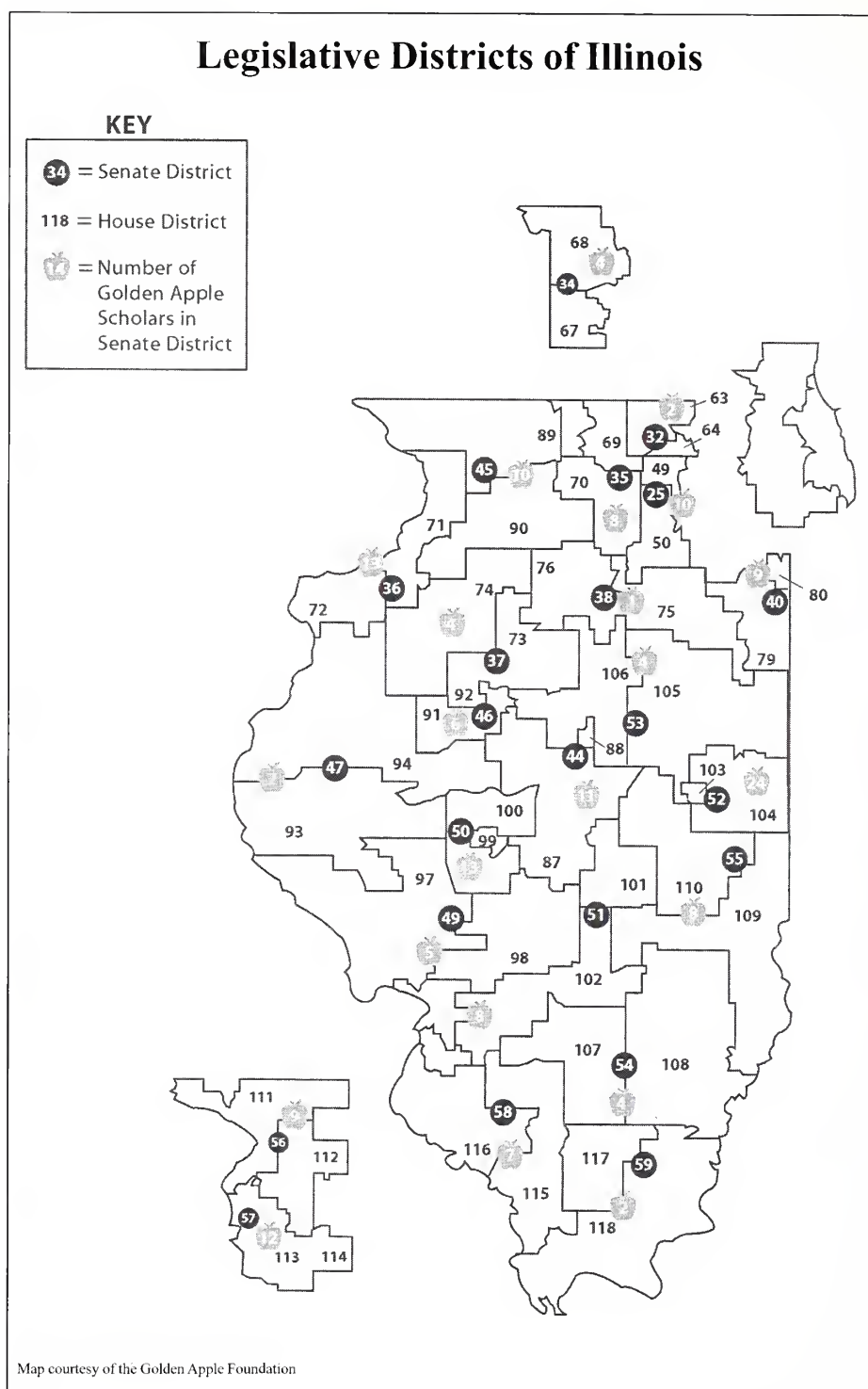
Carroll brushes aside the qualitative judgments offered by Golden Apple.

"Anyone can argue back and forth the merits of this program or that program, or who does a better job," Carroll says. "The bottom line is, the Future Teacher Corps is helping to put teachers into underserved communities in return for getting a helping hand from the state. And we're proud of that."

Although it's had two previous names under two previous governors, Illinois Future Teacher Corps has been around since 1995, two years after then-Gov. Jim Edgar began funding Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois.

The two programs coexisted rather harmoniously until two years ago, when Gov. Blagojevich took office under the burden of a state deficit pegged as high as \$5 billion. Golden Apple staved off budget cuts last year, but its \$3.8 million allocation was absent when the governor proposed his second annual budget back in February.

"Golden Apple is a private organization that receives a tremendous amount of financial support from sources other than state government," says Carroll of Blagojevich's budget office. "Considering



that we had so few financial resources at our disposal, we needed to prioritize our spending and put state programs at the top of our spending list."

Golden Apple's 2002 tax return shows \$1.4 million in private contributions, but the scholars program largely relies on state support, which, after negotiations, was cut by 20 percent this year.

Contributions help the foundation present annual excellence in teaching

awards, put on training workshops and offer an alternative teacher certification program for college graduates seeking a second career in the classroom.

Lawmakers say Golden Apple has a reputation as a successful program, which helped beat back the governor's budget cuts. During this summer's overtime session, the General Assembly cut \$2.9 million from Blagojevich's Illinois Future Teacher Corps while

finding \$3 million to restore most of Golden Apple's funding.

"It's something that actually works," says Senate Minority Leader Frank Watson, a Greenville Republican. "I think it was important that we put back as much funding as we could."

Democrats expressed similar sentiments. Still, the foundation will seek additional funding in this month's veto session, hoping to return its state funding to the \$3.8 million approved last year. Of course that, too, took some wrangling, as the foundation won \$600,000 in a supplemental spending bill that added \$284 million to the state budget last March.

This year, Golden Apple staved off elimination of state funding by deploying grassroots lobbying and distributing maps that showed how many scholars reside in each legislative district. It also helped to have Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's wife, Maggie, and Arne Duncan, Chicago schools CEO, on the foundation's board of directors.

Meanwhile, the state could end up paying a Georgia firm \$300,000 this year to track down former students who were awarded state teacher scholarships but didn't fulfill their teaching obligations. Risk Management Alternatives landed the contract, which promises the company a 20 percent cut of each debt it collects. The state says the contract likely won't exceed \$200,000 this year, an indication of the difficulty involved in finding debtors and convincing them to settle up.

Since 2001, the state has paid a Texas firm \$181,243 to track down truant teacher scholars, but only 16 percent of 1,647 debtors paid up. Today, nearly 1,800 debtors owe the state \$11.5 million. The bulk of that debt stems from more than a dozen defunct teacher scholarships previously administered by the Illinois State Board of Education. They offered incentives for students willing to teach certain subjects, but have been supplanted by the broader Minority Teachers of Illinois and Illinois Future Teacher Corps scholarships.

Overall, the debt accumulated by teachers whose careers were cut short reflects an attrition problem that plagues the profession as a whole. A third of new teachers leave the profession in their first three years and nearly half exit

within five, according to an analysis of annual teacher surveys collected by the National Center for Education Statistics.

"The governor is crazy for cutting the [Golden Apple] program because he's basically cutting the best teacher training program in the state at a time when teachers are leaving the profession in droves," says Katherine Hogan, an English teacher at Curie High School in southwest Chicago. She grew up in suburban Wheaton, but Hogan says her experience as a Golden Apple scholar prepared her for the Chicago Public Schools. It's an environment where some students are so smart they're bored with class and some may have never really learned to read. "So," Hogan says, "you have to find a way to reach all of them in 45 minutes a day."

Of course, not all Golden Apple scholars end up in the classroom or stay to fulfill their five-year commitment. Since its inception in 1989, Golden Apple has had an 80 percent retention rate, meaning four of five scholars are still in school or have graduated and are fulfilling their teaching requirements. Belmonte notes that figure doesn't include a few dozen graduates who are teaching, but not in Illinois, or are not in an academically challenged or low-income school.

The success rate for the state's two teacher scholarships is much less clear. In 2002, the state surveyed nearly 1,700 students who had graduated with the help of the scholarships. Of those working, 86 percent were teaching or had met their obligation to teach. But another 120 recipients had been out of college at least five years and hadn't started teaching, meaning they would soon default, dropping the success rate below 80 percent. Current rules now require recipients to begin teaching within a year of graduation.

Some of the recipients surveyed two years ago said they left teaching in search of more money, a common refrain in a profession fraught with low pay and long hours. Last year, starting pay for a college-educated teacher in Illinois was as low as \$20,890. Golden Apple scholars say their program offers the support teachers need to resist the lure of more pay and lower workloads outside the classroom.

"As a teacher, it's really essential to

On the more immediate horizon is this month's veto session, where Golden Apple is asking for \$800,000, which would bring them back to last year's funding level.

have some sort of backbone that you know will support you, keep you going," says Ziomara Perez, a preschool teacher at Jahn Elementary, a public school on Chicago's North Side. "Sometimes you lose sight [of the reality] that you're here for the children because you're bombarded with all these politics and paperwork. You forget you're here for the kids, and unless you have someone to keep reminding you why you became a teacher in the first place, teachers, they end up looking at it as a money thing and 'I'm going to go find a job that pays me more.'"

With the state's fiscal woes continuing to obscure most discussion in Springfield, the Golden Apple Foundation hopes lawmakers won't lose sight of the support their program offers in a field where recruits are in demand but often underprepared. The foundation has even suggested a classroom study that would pit Golden Apple scholars against recipients of state teacher scholarships, a test that would let their students' scores do the talking.

On the more immediate horizon is this month's veto session, where Golden Apple is asking for \$800,000, which would bring them back to last year's funding level. In this respect, the foundation joins a long list of competitors, says Steve Brown, spokesman for Democratic House Speaker Michael Madigan. "I think that the shorter list would be people who don't need money in November." □

PROGRESS LOST?

The former chancellor of the University of Illinois at Springfield critiques the status of public higher education

Excerpt from a speech by Naomi B. Lynn

Last month on *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, I watched an interview with Dana Gioia, the chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. He stated that, for the first time in modern history, literature reading in the adult population has fallen below 50 percent. This drop in reading crossed all demographic categories and is accelerating rapidly.

Gioia pointed out that reading requires a sustained focus and attention. It requires use of memory; it nourishes imagination and causes a kind of mental enlargement. He expressed concern about a society that is losing its mental capacity. The NEA survey on reading also found that a reader is 30 percent more likely to do volunteer and charity work. Gioia stated, "If we believe that democracy depends on civic participation, this is an alarming trend."

We all know that you do not need a college education to love reading. But we also know that it is in college that many of us learned to appreciate good literature and to use it to enrich our lives. Although there are many explanations for this dumbing down, such as television and time spent on computers, higher education must bear some responsibility. I suspect that the weakening of general education may be a contributing factor.

If you watched the Tony Awards this year, you know that the prize for the best musical went to the Broadway show *Avenue Q*. One of its hit tunes goes as follows: *What do you do with a B.A. in English?/ What is my life going to be?/*

Four years of college and plenty of knowledge/ Have earned me this useless degree.

I will admit that my back stiffens when I hear people devaluing a liberal arts education and promoting only those courses that prepare students for a specific job. I would be the last one to suggest that finding employment is not important, but I also understand that we are entering an age when the creative class will dominate and when careers and fields will change at a rapid rate. I believe that a strong grounding in the humanities and liberal arts prepares us to meet these challenges because the critical thinking skills developed in these studies have significance and applicability that no other study can match.

Recently, I have noticed an increase in chatter advocating the value of a degree while devaluing the value of an

education. The name of their game is get it fast and get it cheap.

Let me give you a few examples of what I am talking about. Almost all high schools have advanced placement. That is not all bad — it could free students to take additional courses in college that a tight schedule would not permit. If it is used correctly, advanced placement can be a positive thing. Unfortunately, it is often sold as a way to get through college as quickly as possible and avoid taking courses in a higher education setting. The implication is high school-college, same-old, same-old.

CLEP [College Level Examination Program] tests go even further. You study at home and if you pass a standardized test, you don't have to go to class at all. I have known students who have completed most of their first two years before they attend their first college class. They go right into their majors without having the broad liberal education necessary to benefit fully from these specialized courses. These are the same graduates who cannot speak or write good English. Throughout their careers, they will be penalized for these weaknesses.

A related example from the get-it-cheap, get-it-fast school is that it doesn't matter where you get your degree. All institutions of higher education are equal. In fact, the first two years are so inconsequential that you are encouraged to save your money and get the cheapest degree possible. We don't notice this too

Once you begin to think of universities as another business enterprise, you've lost the whole point of what goes on in a university. You invite practices on the part of the university that no one wants: cutting corners in ways that will eliminate programs, enlarge class memberships so you have overcrowded classrooms, outsource a lot of your instruction, cut down on students who are in need of remedial work.

*Stanley Fish to Illinois Issues
December 2003*

much in Springfield because we have two excellent two-year colleges here. But those of us who have taught in upper division programs notice the wide gap in preparation among the transfer students.

And, of course, the proliferation of degree mills is a national scandal.

A year ago, when state Sen. Steve Rauschenberger heard that the University of Illinois at Chicago was enticing eminent (and thus expensive) faculty away from distinguished universities, he was purported to have said, "Let them teach at Stanford." In response, Dr. Stanley Fish, then Dean of Arts and Sciences, wrote an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* in which he discussed the difference between a university where instructors are well-trained and perfectly competent, and a university where the instructors, in addition to being well-trained and competent, are producing the scholarship that is taught at other universities.

Fish wrote about his determination at UIUC to hire at least one faculty member in each department who contributes to the knowledge they are transmitting. He asserted, "There is something particularly powerful and exciting about watching and interacting with someone whose discipline-shaping ideas are being worked out and tested at this moment in the classroom. It is an excitement students will feel even when they know almost nothing about the credentials or national renown of their instructors; and it is an excitement that will flower ... in a decision to take up a certain line of work or in a resource that can be sustaining at a difficult moment or in a memory that keeps alive and renews the pleasures of serious thought."

It isn't cheap and it isn't fast, but it is an education. We should resist all pressure to lower the quality of our education and thus betray the students who have placed their trust in us.

More than 2,400 years ago Aristotle said, "All men by nature desire knowledge." Assuming this to be true, those of us who believe in education have a responsibility to encourage and nurture this attribute and to resist all efforts to undermine it.

At this time, when education is itself being challenged, we are also facing

a crisis in public support for higher education. These are not unrelated because the high cost of education makes it tempting and often necessary to take any shortcuts available. Some students can barely afford a degree; they can't afford an education.

Some of the drop in public support is the natural consequence of the economic challenges facing our state. But this decline in support preceded our current economic problems.

When I was at Georgia State University, the [Robert W.] Woodruff Foundation (Coca Cola) was Atlanta's major beneficiary. Unfortunately, it had a policy of not supporting public universities. Before I left, Woodruff had changed its policy because it realized that, if the city of Atlanta was going to thrive, it would have to have an educated citizenry and that the state could not or would not provide that support.

Although the state and federal governments have responded to the increased cost of education, and to a general drop in public support, with some income tax breaks, a few grants, low-interest student loan rates and by locking in tuition for four years, they have not come close to meeting the needs. These well-meaning efforts have not proven adequate. If you don't believe this, just talk to a middle-class family with one or more college-age children.

Unfortunately, the extent of the problem is masked by the larger number of high school graduates in the population. Increased enrollments reflect this larger pool; it says little about the number of middle-income, poor and minority students who are being deprived of an education.

Donald E. Heller of the Center

Illinois is still among the states with the most affordable higher education. But it soon may no longer be able to make that claim. Illinois' higher education funding, including student aid, is dwindling, while tuition at Illinois' colleges and universities is rising.

Bethany K. Warner, Illinois Issues
June 2003

While it's true that state appropriated support for Illinois' public colleges and universities has increased over the years, it hasn't grown by as much as other sources of funding, including tuition and government contracts. In fact, the state of Illinois each year covers a smaller portion of operating expenses at Southern [Illinois University] and other public universities, as lawmakers struggle to balance such competing priorities as health care for poor people, prisons and K-12 education.

Aaron Chambers, Illinois Issues
November 2003

for the Study of Higher Education at Pennsylvania State University points out that federal studies on financial aid fail to capture the effect of "cost discouragement" on students early in their high school careers. He asserts, "If a ninth-grader believes that her parents will never be able to afford college tuition ... she might stop trying to earn decent grades. ... She would never show up in analysis because these studies tend to interpret such [a] student's absence as a function of a lack of preparation without acknowledging the role of cost anxiety."

Imagine, Dr. Heller says, a world in which cars were generally so expensive that low-income people could not afford them. "We could not blame the fact that they don't own cars on the fact that they don't get licenses, don't go to dealerships, don't take test drives and don't fill out loan applications."

This lack of meaningful support for access to higher education should be of concern to anyone who believes in the power of education to transform and maintain our democracy. □

Naomi B. Lynn was the first chancellor at the University of Illinois at Springfield, a title she took in 1995, when the former Sangamon State University became part of the University of Illinois, and held until she stepped down in 2000. She was president of Sangamon State University from 1991 until the transition. This speech was delivered as part of the Taste of UIS series, sponsored by the university's alumni association.

Gridlock USA

No one has grand expectations for Congress in a presidential election year. But the highly charged partisan atmosphere this year has been especially frustrating

Analysis by Dori Meinert
Illustration by Mike Cramer

Eager to hit the campaign trail, Congress adjourned in early October after a flurry of last-minute votes on intelligence reform, disaster relief and tax breaks for individuals and corporations.

The mad scramble was intended to make up for the partisan gridlock that blocked progress on a multitude of bills for the first eight months of the year. But lawmakers still left plenty of unfinished business, which they may try to tackle after the November 2 elections or leave until the new Congress convenes in January.

No one has ever had grand expectations for Congress in a presidential election year. But many say the highly charged partisan atmosphere this year was especially frustrating.

"Since I've been in Congress, it's probably the worst I've ever seen it," Peoria Republican Rep. Ray LaHood said in the final weeks of this session. "Every issue is political. Everything that anyone says is political."

Sen. Dick Durbin, a Springfield Democrat, weighed in with this reference to the previous House Republican leadership: "The [Newt] Gingrich era was worse. But it's still bad."

Among the measures that did make it to the finish line was a \$137 billion corporate tax overhaul package that

would repeal an export tax break deemed an unfair trade subsidy by the World Trade Organization and would, presumably, end sanctions by the European Union. Caterpillar and Boeing, two of Illinois' largest exporters, were among those corporations that have benefited from the tax break and received two years of transition benefits. But the legislation went far beyond that and included a host of new tax breaks for corporations, from Starbucks to Home Depot.

"You don't have to be a veteran in Washington to know that the worst things happen in the closing moments, and this was a perfect example," said Durbin, who voted against the measure. "The special interests had a field day with this bill."

Congress also approved an extension of three popular tax breaks for individuals estimated to cost the federal government \$146 billion over 10 years in lost revenue and \$14.5 billion in relief for hurricane victims and drought-stricken farmers and ranchers.

In what lawmakers hope will be their crowning achievement this year, the Senate and House approved conflicting plans for overhauling the nation's intelligence agencies. Congressional leaders in both chambers left open the possibility of reconvening briefly

before Election Day if a compromise can be reached.

But numerous other measures were left by the wayside.

Even such politically popular proposals as the six-year bill to reauthorize the nation's transportation programs were left hanging. Earlier this year, many had predicted it was the one piece of legislation that would be approved because it contains thousands of projects sought by lawmakers for their congressional districts.

With the White House protesting its \$299 billion price tag and House and Senate negotiators unable to agree among themselves, lawmakers extended the current transportation program until next May. It was the sixth extension and its length signaled leaders had little hope of a speedy resolution this year.

It also increased the uncertainty of state officials nationwide trying to plan multiyear road programs.

"If they wait for another eight months, it makes life a lot more difficult for us," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Tim Martin just before the extension passed in late September. Illinois, like most other states, was hoping for a boost in federal funding. With no additional federal funds coming, the state's capital road program likely will go from \$1.5 billion this year to \$1.2 billion next year, with the state's share of that

increasing, he said.

An energy bill, which contains an ethanol mandate long sought by Illinois farmers, has been stalled for more than a year in the Senate. Democrats, including Durbin, were joined by some Republicans in protesting the inclusion of a liability waiver for makers of methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), a fuel additive found to pollute groundwater. Critics also charged that measure, estimated to cost \$31 billion over 10 years, was laden with benefits to special interests.

Congress also took a pass on welfare reform reauthorization, extending the 1996 welfare law through March after negotiations to rewrite the law failed. While other states had pushed for changes in the law, Illinois officials are content with the status quo.

And lawmakers allowed a 10-year ban on the sale of certain assault weapons to lapse without acting.

Meanwhile, the House kept busy with numerous politically charged issues that were certain never to see the light of day in the Senate but served to bolster conservative support. In September, the House passed a measure protecting the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance recited by schoolchildren. That same month, the House failed to win the two-thirds majority needed to approve a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriages, an effort that previously

Governance by delay

Illinois Issues tracks congressional action, or inaction, on policies important to this state.

Welfare

Edward Felker, "Let it be,"

October 2004, page 28

Dan A. Lewis, "When help helps,"

June 2003, page 26

Curtis Lawrence, "Working without a net,"

September 2001, page 16

Trade

Dori Meinert, "Trade wars,"

February 2004, page 18

Transportation

Dori Meinert, "Federal roadblock,"

April 2004, page 28

Kurt Erickson, "Over troubled bridges,"

September 2003, page 20



In recent years, Congress has found it increasingly difficult to pass appropriations bills on time. Seven of last year's spending bills were rolled into one omnibus measure that wasn't approved by the Senate until this past January — one month after the House voted and four months after the start of the federal fiscal year.

failed in the Senate. The House also voted to repeal the District of Columbia's longstanding ban on handguns and semi-automatic weapons, but Senate leaders refused to take the issue up.

Once again, Congress failed to complete action on most of its 13 "must-do" appropriations bills, considered by most to be one of its basic responsibilities. Instead, lawmakers approved a stop-gap funding bill that will keep federal agencies running through November 20, ensuring a lame-duck session. But it's unclear whether much can be achieved.

"If you can't solve it in the regular time, you can't solve it in the overtime," says former Republican Rep. Bill Frenzel of Minnesota, a 20-year House veteran who is now a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution. Unless there's a substantial change in makeup of one or both houses as a result of the November elections, Frenzel says, "there's nothing much for people to get excited about. I don't think they'd be willing to stay around a long time."

At a minimum, Congress is expected to return November 16 to approve a massive spending measure that includes all nine of the unfinished appropriations bills. Lawmakers also must vote to raise the national debt limit, something lawmakers didn't want highlighted before the election.

In recent years, Congress has found it increasingly difficult to pass appropriations bills on time. Seven of last year's spending bills were rolled into one omnibus measure that wasn't approved by the Senate until this past January — one month after the House voted and four months after the start of the federal fiscal year.

The presidential election, and the slim margins by which Republicans control the Senate and the House, increased the partisan divide and contributed to the gridlock this year, congressional observers say.

Congress has become increasingly polarized in recent years, making legislative compromises more difficult to reach. Some blame redistricting, which has produced fewer competitive seats. The media, particularly television talk shows, reward lawmakers who are more extreme. Some also point to the increased influence of campaign consultants, who warn candidates to stake

out clear-cut conservative or liberal positions, rather than something more middle-of-the-road, to avoid being pilloried by their opponents.

Sean Theriault, an assistant professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin, who is writing a book on congressional polarization, concludes that party leaders in the House and the Senate are just more powerful than they were in the 1970s and 1980s. The majority party leaders control what comes to the House or Senate floor for a vote and how many amendments will be allowed.

A study of congressional votes last year found Congress was more polarized than it has been in the 50 years *Congressional Quarterly* has been analyzing party unity votes. The study found the average House Republican toed the party line 91 percent of the time in 2003, while Democrats voted with their party 87 percent of the time. Senate Republicans voted the party position 94 percent of the time compared to 85 percent for the Democrats.

The Illinois congressional delegation is typically as predictable in voting on the major issues. All but four of the state's 19 House members and two senators voted with their parties 90 percent or more of the time in 2003, according to *Congressional Quarterly*.

Retiring Rep. William Lipinski, a Chicago Democrat, had the lowest "party unity" score, voting with his party's leaders 77 percent of the time. Urbana Republican Rep. Tim Johnson voted with the Republican Party 82 percent of the time, while Mark Kirk, a Wilmette Republican, scored 87 percent. Belleville Democratic Rep. Jerry Costello voted with his fellow Democrats 84 percent of the time.

At an individual level, polarization occurs because people want to be right and don't want to listen to views that conflict with their own, says Mark Gerzon, president of Mediators Foundation, a nonprofit group dedicated to conflict resolution. Gerzon was hired to conduct the congressional retreats to promote civility among lawmakers in 1997 and 1999.

In a telling sign, the January retreat has been cancelled due to lack of interest. □

Dori Meinert covers Congress for Copley News Service.

Q&A Question & Answer

Terry Peterson

This year's Motorola Award winner



Terry Peterson

A former Chicago alderman, he has been the chief executive officer of the Chicago Housing Authority since 2000. Peterson has primary responsibility for implementing Chicago's 10-year, \$1.5 billion Plan for Transformation, a housing redevelopment plan aimed at 10 communities in that city (see Illinois Issues, June, page 28). For his efforts at that agency, Peterson has won the 2004 Motorola Excellence in Public Service Award, an annual honor that goes to appointed public officials in the city of Chicago, Cook County or the state of Illinois. The award is given by NORBIC of Chicago, an economic development organization, and is co-sponsored by Illinois Issues. The following is an edited version of an interview with Peterson

conducted by Ed Wojcicki, the magazine's former publisher, who chairs the award selection committee. He took the photographs at the award luncheon in Peterson's honor.

Q. How is the plan going?

So far, so good. We're past the halfway point in terms of the number of units we're committed to bringing back. The Plan for Transformation is committed to bringing back 25,000 units of housing, either rehabbed or new in a mixed-income setting.

We think we've got developments that are in great locations. We're working with the Chicago public schools system. We're working with the Chicago Park District. So, we're looking to make sure we've got adequate green space and parks. We're working with the Department of Planning and Development to bring in commercial development. So we're talking about communities where anyone would want to live, the kind of community that you look for when you make a decision to buy a home or move into a neighborhood: a good place to shop, good schools, good security in the area — all of those basic amenities.

Q. To me, one of the most amazing things is that not too long ago, if you put the words "public housing" and "Chicago" in the same sentence, the connotation wouldn't have been anywhere near that good.

You're right. I think the good thing about it now is that we've got developments where you can go see, touch and feel it. As you know, sometimes talking about a vision, it's hard to realize it until folks begin to see bricks and mortar come out of the ground.

Q. What obstacles do you face when you go to those really wiped out areas?

I think we're fortunate here in the city of Chicago that this is something the mayor made a commitment to. He has marshaled all of the forces — all city departments are involved, all sister agencies. I talked about the Park District, you've got the CTA, you've got the Board of Education. Everyone is at the table: the Department of Planning and Development, the Department of Human Services, the mayor's Office of Workforce Development.

So the mayor has marshaled all the resources of the city, as well as sister agencies, to make sure that if we create these mixed-income communities, we're moving away from the isolated developments that public housing has been for the last 40 years in this city. You're restoring the street grids, you're coming in with new sewers, new water mains, new curbs, new gutters, and you're integrating public housing back into the fabric of the community. So you can't tell the difference between a public housing unit or an affordable unit or a market-rate unit. Units all look alike, so you no longer have that stigma attached to them.

But the other thing the mayor is doing is to make sure these communities have all of the amenities that other communities would have: a decent grocery store, a video store, a shoe repair place, a flower shop, a Hallmark, a place to buy candy or whatever.

And then you've got senior housing, supportive housing. You've got a lot of grandmothers who are now taking care of their grandkids, and so he's doing what we call "grand-family housing" at all of our sites. There are SROs [single-room occupancy units] for individuals who are struggling and still have challenges in their lives. So it's sort of like the rebuilding of communities from a holistic approach. It's just not the housing. It's the retail, the commercial, the parks, the schools, the green space, all of those things that make a healthy community. That's really what the Plan for Transformation is all about, and that's what the mayor's vision is.

Q. And where are you in terms of completing the plan?

Fifty-eight percent of the units have now been brought back in terms of rehab, or new units coming back in a mixed-income setting. We've got 25 mixed-financed deals that we've closed to date. We've got commitments, support from the state. They have set aside \$3 million for tax credits for public housing projects. The city has continued to commit millions of dollars

in home loans as well as tax credits. The mayor has set aside millions of dollars for infrastructure. And not only that, but I think it's important to note that the administration in Washington, under former [federal Housing and Urban Development] Secretary Mel Martinez and continuing with Secretary Alfonso Jackson, they have continued to keep their commitment to the city of Chicago, to the mayor, to the Chicago Housing Authority to assist us and to give us the flexibility to move this process forward.

Q. This is a long-term process. Will there still be families who are not in good housing when this is over?

No, no. Just to give you a little history. In 1995, HUD came in and took over the Chicago Housing Authority due to a whole host of challenges. After about four years here, they approached the city and the mayor and said, "OK, we think we've corrected some of the challenges and we'd like for the city to take it back over." And the mayor said, "Before we head down that road, I want to make sure we're going to be able to transform public housing, we're going to be able to integrate it back into the city, and that we're going to end the isolation of public housing residents in the city of Chicago."

So, because of the commitment of the mayor, the 25,000 units we're going to bring back, all of those units will either be rebuilt or rehabbed. In our senior buildings — and I talked about 9,500 units — each of our senior buildings now have new windows, new air conditioners, new stoves, new refrigerators, new electrical upgrades, new elevators. In our rehabbed scattered-site units, same thing: new stoves, new refrigerators, paint, electrical upgrades. So all 25,000 units in our inventory at the end of the day will have either been rebuilt or rehabbed.

So, no, at the end of the Plan for Transformation, we won't have residents living in the kind of housing that we encountered when the mayor took over in June of 1999.

Q. That's a bold statement.

That's the plan, and I think the mayor deserves a lot of credit for taking this on. There were a lot of folks, I'm sure, who

said to him it doesn't make sense to do this. But I think it speaks volumes in terms of his commitment to the city and also to public housing residents that he's taking it on. You can drive around the city today and see the vision is moving forward.

Q. So the high-rise public buildings will be like dinosaurs?

Oh yeah. We call them the 16-story gallery high-rise buildings, known as HUD 202 properties. All of those properties are coming down.

There are only four buildings that are going to remain, and these are the Hilliard Homes at 22nd and State — and that's because they have landmark status. But in those four buildings, two will be for family housing. Those will be mixed-income: 50 percent will be "affordable," and 50 percent will be for public housing residents. And then the other two buildings will be for seniors only. So those are the only four buildings that will remain at the end of the Plan for Transformation in terms of gallery-style high-rise properties.

Q. Is this true all over the country? People like you and others have decided high-rises just didn't work?

Well, here's the thing that I think no one knows: 70 percent of the gallery-style, 16-story buildings are located in the city of Chicago.

Q. Wow.

That is the same kind of response that I got from Secretary Martinez when he came to Chicago. He said that until he actually went to HUD and came to Chicago, he had no idea of the magnitude of what the mayor was trying to do here in the city of Chicago.

Seventy percent of the gallery-style "202 properties" built in this country are located in the city of Chicago. So that tells you the magnitude of it. I think across the country, you're seeing more and more housing authorities and more and more cities taking those buildings down and creating mixed-income communities with single-family homes, town homes, three-flats, duplexes. I think that's more the trend.

Q. What has been the reception of the neighbors and the shopkeepers in the area?

First of all, as you get people together and they get to know each other, yes, there have been challenges. Some of the challenges are loud music, kids being loud, whatever.

The thing I've discovered, a lot of the challenges we've encountered in terms of our residents living in mixed-income communities, are some of the same challenges you find in other neighborhoods.

And, like anything, a lot of times it's cultural differences. In public housing they might have played out in front of buildings. If you're in a mixed-income community, now you've got a back yard. Some of those cultural differences have been some of the challenges. But, again, I think that when you talk with most families, be they public housing or market-rate or affordable housing families, they want a decent place to live, they want good schools to send their kids to, they want places to shop in the neighborhood and a good quality of life. That crosses all boundaries no matter what one's economic status is. That's the common thread.

Again, as we've encountered challenges, we've been fortunate that we've been able to pull residents together and talk and try to work through their differences. You find differences in all communities. But I'm not going to sit here and say there haven't been challenges. Yes, there have been challenges, but we've been willing to try to work through those. I think that's part of the process.

Q. What other kinds of obstacles have there been? You say you've had to educate people.

I think that's the biggest thing. When I came on board, one of the first questions I encountered was, "Terry, how are you going to overcome all of the doubt and the naysayers, and also the residents who won't believe you?" I think that was the biggest hurdle — trying to sell the vision — and not just public housing residents, because I can understand their skepticism. I mean, they had been lied to, promised, and if somebody knocked on

your doors after 40 years of broken promises and said, "Guess what, we're going to rebuild mixed-income communities, and you're going to have an opportunity to come back and we're going to work with you to get access to social services, day care, job training, drug treatment or whatever your challenges are," I think most folks are going to say, "Yeah, right!"

What I said to that is, the only way we're going to build confidence in what we're trying to do is to keep our word and to continue to do it.

Q. Can you tell me a success story?

The one that stands out for me is a lady with two little boys that we moved into a new unit on the first floor over at Henry Horner on December 22, 2003. To see her face, this was right before Christmas, and the smiles on the faces of her two young boys makes you realize that what we're doing is the right thing.

There are individuals who want a good quality of life and want the best for their kids. That is one that jumps out at me — moving her in, handing her keys and hearing her talk about how proud she was to have a new home.

We've got families that we've moved out of Cabrini Green into some of the mixed-income developments. North Town Village. Old Orchard. The key is living in mixed-income communities where you don't have constant gunfire. They don't walk out their doors and have to encounter a drug dealer or a gangbanger or prostitution going on. Surroundings have an impact on the lives of kids, and putting them in a better environment helps them, from studying to just appreciating and knowing that there are folks who care about them.

As we bring families back, they also get a chance to see, "Hey, you made the commitment that this is what you were going to do, and you're doing it."

But I want to say this, because here is one of the things that is important, and I don't want to leave this conversation



Peterson visits with Sharon Gist Gilliam (center), chairperson of the Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Housing Authority, on October 13 after receiving the Motorola Excellence in Public Service Award.

without saying this: It's also important that our residents engage in the process of working with us to move toward self-sufficiency. I mean, I could spend millions and millions of dollars, but it's important that our residents engage in the process.

Q. And how do they do that?

We've got service connectors who work with our families. Let's say, for example, if they're facing challenges in their life, or they might have a drug addiction, they might have a job but they need additional job training, then we would hope that our residents would work with the service connectors, make us aware of some of the challenges that they're facing so we could get them access to those services to move forward. That is important. When we've got us making the effort to help them get engaged in the process, I think it's a win-win for everyone.

Q. Some people, when they say good things about the way you've been doing things, compare you to an evangelist. Do you buy the comparison?

I'm not necessarily sure I would buy the comparison. I'm passionate about it. I feel blessed to have found my calling, which I think is to help others. I love my job. I think I've got one of the best jobs

in the world.

Let me say this: You can't do something of this magnitude alone. I have been truly blessed during the four years I've been here. I've got a great board. I've got a great board chairperson in Sharon Gist Gilliam. The mayor has just been unbelievable in his unwavering support.

My colleagues in the City Council, individuals that I've known in the legislative body in Springfield, the Illinois delegation in Washington, there are a lot of folks, Jonathan Fanton at the MacArthur Foundation, Bank of America, Bank One, a lot of individuals and entities have stepped forth. The

private sector, the civic community, the foundation community, all levels of government.

No one person can do this. I can't take credit. I've got a great staff. I think I've got some of the best staff people in the city working here who are committed to this. I approach it with passion, but you can't do something like this alone.

Q. Would you call it successful?

I would say that we've come a long way, but we've got a long way to go. We've got a lot of work ahead of us.

Here's the other thing that's important to end this story on. At the end of the day, the success of the Plan for Transformation won't be measured in bricks and mortar. The true success of this plan will be measured in terms of how we improved the quality of life for public housing residents who lived in public housing and who had been isolated for the past 40 years. That will be the true measure.

We will build beautiful homes. We hope we rebuild beautiful communities, but how has all of that impacted and transformed the lives of public housing residents? That's the true measure of success, and we've got a long way to go. Our residents need a lot of support and a lot of help. So we've made progress but we've got a long way to go, and that's how I would sum up the Plan for Transformation. □

Three decades of public affairs journalism



Sometimes the more things change, the more they stay the same. A perusal of back issues of this magazine yields a striking continuity in many of the policy questions state officials have wrestled with over the past 30 years. We highlight a few here. This long view offers an opportunity to get in on the beginning, then see how things turned out. In some instances, as we point out, even the best intentions can go awry. Whether public

officials cover the same ground or change course, whether they move forward or fall back, the past can provide a bridge to the future. Throughout next year, we'll explore some of the challenges Illinoisans are likely to face over the next three decades. But in the final months of this year, we take a look back.

The Editors

Energy resources

In the mid-1970s, Illinois policymakers weighed the relative merits of coal power and nuclear energy. They were still doing so three decades later.

With last winter's energy shortage as a sharp memory, State leaders began debate last spring on an energy program for Illinois. Spurred on by the spiralling price of fuel, both the executive and legislative branches of State government sought ways to increase energy supplies through the application of new technology to existing resources. Although oil and natural gas presently supply nearly 80 percent of the nation's fuel, both of these sources are limited, and the nation's massive coal deposits appear to be the best hope for achieving Washington's goal of "energy self-sufficiency" by 1980. One-sixth of the nation's coal lies under Illinois soil, and the thrust of energy activity in Illinois, planners agree, will be to increase production of this black gold, estimated to amount to 150 billion tons.

William Lambrecht, January 1975

So why is nuclear power poised to make a comeback in Illinois? Given its history, a resurgence wouldn't seem likely. But that's exactly what is happening in this state, and in some

other states that have nuclear plants.

The pending \$8.2 billion merger of Commonwealth Edison's parent company, Unicom Corp., with Philadelphia-based nuclear giant PECO Energy will make Illinois' nuclear plants part of the largest fleet of commercial nuclear reactors in the nation and the third-largest in the world. The merger will affect the vast majority of the state's electric customers — the 3.4 million customers Chicago-based ComEd has in northern Illinois, as well as the downstate customers of Decatur-based Illinois Power, which recently sold its only nuclear plant in Clinton to a partnership shared by PECO.

Stephanie Zimmermann, May 2000

Water commerce

Locks and dam renovation could be the longest-running political controversy.

The navigation facility Illinois politicians like to proclaim as "more important than the Panama Canal" is located on the Mississippi River, 26 miles north of St. Louis, outside the town of Alton.

During harvest, when the grain barges fill the river, the two-hour process of dividing the huge, 1,000-foot long barge to fit the creaky, leak-ridden 600-foot Alton locks backs up the barges for miles, creating delays of up to 18 hours, sometimes longer.

The modern river is dredged, dammed and tamed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to maintain a nine-foot deep channel for commercial barge traffic. The coal and petroleum barges head north for the industrial centers of Chicago and Minneapolis. The grain barges make their way south to New Orleans, export bound.

Watching these "river traffic jams" does little to explain why the 40-year-old Locks and Dam No. 26 should have created a major uproar in the nation's capital. But Congress has finally taken action that reverses nearly 200 years of federal policy on the waterways and, it has been argued, will fundamentally reshape the nation's transportation future.

The legal and legislative battle over building a new and bigger Locks 26 to accommodate those 1,000-foot long barge tows has been going on for well over four years.

The present structure has been called a dangerous "bottleneck," threatening river transportation throughout the entire Mississippi River Basin, and the proposal to replace it has been called the "opening wedge" in a Corps plan to quadruple barge traffic on the Mississippi.

Michael Isikoff, January 1979

While a proposed lock expansion project would put some additional stress on the river ecosystem, environmental groups say a multibillion dollar overhaul shouldn't happen without designating money to mitigate the degradation that has accrued since 1930, when the locks began directing river traffic. And they agree with taxpayer groups, who argue that reconfiguring the river controls would represent an undeserved handout for the agricultural industry. They point to statistics showing stagnant growth in barge traffic over the past 20 years and predict minimal increases over the next five decades.

Those arguments are at the core of a controversy that halted lock expansion efforts four years ago. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency that has spent 11 years and \$70.6 million studying the issue, was scheduled in 2001 to deliver a report charting the river's future for five decades to come.

The corps was weighing the economic benefits of installing new, longer locks where congestion strains the flow of commerce. As it turns out, the scale was rigged. In early 2000, Donald Sweeney, a senior economist from the corps' St. Louis District, came forward with evidence senior officials manipulated data to justify the project after the study initially found that lock expansions weren't worth the cost. A few months later, a corps economist working out of Rock Island backed up Sweeney's allegations.

Shortly after, the study was suspended, restructured, then restarted.

Pat Guinane, July/August 2004

Economic subsidies

In the late 1980s, Illinois joined other states in offering financial incentives to lure private businesses to stay or locate here. The joint venture between Chrysler Motors Corp. and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. of Japan secured such subsidies on the promise of 2,800 new jobs.

In 1989, Illinois Auditor General Robert Cronson charged the state had spent \$86,669 to secure each job at the Diamond-Star Motors plant at Normal. The administration estimated the true figure was closer to \$29,000 per job. In any event, this fall, some of the workers who were hired in the 1980s got pink

slips as the plant announced plans to lay off more than 1,000 workers.

"Smokestack chasing" may be passe, but in the late 1990s, the state subsidized a proposed fish farmer cooperative. In September, Auditor General William Holland found the state Agriculture Department did a poor job of overseeing \$6.9 million in co-op grants.

Diamond-Star Motors was incorporated on October 7, 1985, and the ground-breaking took place on April 18, 1986. That ground-breaking ceremony was unique in that it included the ministrations of a Shinto priest and the spreading of Japanese soil on the original prairies. As someone who has studied and written about the rise and fall of the automobile culture in the Midwest, I could not help but be struck by this juxtaposition of Oriental and Occidental cultures in the American heartland, a place which, after all, created the assembly line, mass-merchandising and outsourcing — all concepts without which Diamond-Star itself would be unthinkable. And I could not avoid the inevitable questions: Is this new company *better* than its American predecessors? Does the much-vaunted Japanese-style "team" or "circle" method of production really work? And what would happen if *all* automobile production in the continental United States fell under the aegis of Japan Inc.? Finally, will the active role played by the state of Illinois in attracting such ventures (and "sweetening" the deal with various tax and educational incentives) redound to our ultimate credit or shame?

Daniel L. Guillory, July 1989

Indeed, interest in "farming" fish has increased in the five years since fish biologist Jerry Kaat moved to southern Illinois. Kaat, who lives in Marissa, urges more locals to take advantage of the countless small ponds and lakes in the area, many of which are ideal for raising fish. "Anyone with a quality water source can do this. There are numerous places here, so there's lots of potential."

Kaat, formerly with the federal fish and wildlife agency, also has been working with some of that region's state lawmakers to create a fish co-op,

like those that already exist for such commodities as beans, corn and hogs. He argues the venture could buy fish food and equipment in bulk, getting the goods at cheaper rates and passing the savings on to enterprising individuals. The co-op could work with the soon-to-be fish processing center at the Pinckneyville prison. That would help to lower costs, too, because the center is expected to process fish at nearly half the cost of private commercial operations.

This spring lawmakers agreed, approving start-up funding of \$1 million a year for 10 years, which supporters argue will enable the co-op to become self-sufficient.

Sean Crawford, June 1999

Short takes

Planning agencies and existing facilities so effectively insisted that the construction of hospitals and other health care facilities was on a runaway course, that in June 1974 the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1609 which provided that no new facility could be built and no existing one modified without the approval of the [Comprehensive State Health Planning Agency].

Edna McConnell, February 1975

Former U.S. Rep. Glenn Poshard of Carbondale takes the reins at the reincarnated Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board, a state oversight panel under federal investigation.

Online, Pat Guinane, September 2004

...

A struggle to establish its independent status as a nonpartisan constitutional agency, free from outside bureaucratic controls, characterized the first year of the newly created State Board of Education.

Laurie Joseph Wasserman, May 1976

[Gov. Rod] Blagojevich signed a bill that granted him authority to replace seven members of the state board and then tapped Chicago lawyer Jesse Ruiz, who served as chief counsel to the Legislative Latino Caucus, board chair.

Online, Beverley Scobell, September 2004

Governor hires press aide for Chicago

Gerardo Cardenas, assignment editor at the Tribune Company's Spanish Chicago daily *Hoy*, is Gov. Rod Blagojevich's new Chicago press secretary. He is filling a vacancy left when **Abby Ottenhoff** became deputy director of communications last year. Cardenas will serve as a spokesman with the English-language and Spanish-language media. Those duties previously had been filled by Maribel Hopgood-Bracho, who left the governor's staff to work with former deputy governor Doug Scofield's public relations firm. She handled those and other roles as director of community relations for Blagojevich.

New head of SIUC Public Policy Institute

"Interim" is gone from **Mike Lawrence's** title. The former reporter and gubernatorial press secretary was selected to replace the late U.S. Sen. Paul Simon as director of Southern Illinois University at Carbondale's Public Policy Institute.

Lawrence, press secretary to former Secretary of State and Gov. Jim Edgar, was hired as the institute's associate director in 1997. Before joining government's ranks, he ran Statehouse news bureaus for the *Quad-City Times*, *Lee Enterprises* and the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and held top editing posts at the *Quad-City Times*.

The Carbondale resident's appointment, which took effect October 1, is subject to the approval of the SIU Board of Trustees.

Martin Simon said in a printed release that he believes it was his father's wish that "Mike carry on in his tradition at the institute."



Mike Lawrence

APPOINTMENTS

Former U.S. Rep. **Glenn Poshard** of Carbondale took the reins at the reincarnated Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board, a state oversight panel under federal investigation. Gov. Rod Blagojevich named Poshard chairman and appointed two other board members, ending a two-month hiatus for the panel that oversees health facilities projects.

The move establishes a quorum, allowing the panel to consider about 100 applications from nursing homes, hospitals and other treatment centers looking to add services, expand facilities or change management. Those efforts have been on hold since reports of a federal whistle-blower lawsuit surfaced in July. Poshard, a Democrat, is joined by **Pamela Woodward**, a Palos Park Democrat, and **Susan Lopatka**, a Chicago Republican.

The governor suspended board activities following allegations that a longtime member helped a Chicago businessman extort a Naperville hospital. Lawmakers then dissolved the nine-member board, replacing it with a five-member panel that must adhere to stricter rules regarding conflicts of interest. Members also must have some background in health care.

Woodward, a vice president for Morgan Stanley, spent seven years as a nurse training specialist for City Colleges of Chicago. Lopatka retired two years ago from the state Department of Human Services, where she worked as a nursing consultant for Cook County. She previously served as nursing director for the University of Chicago Medical Center's Chicago Lying-In Hospital.

Agency releases warden

Vandalia Correctional Center escaped the chopping block, but the warden got the ax.

Larry Hopkins and assistant warden **Craig Foster** were fired in late September, two months after Gov. Rod Blagojevich abandoned plans to shutter the minimum security prison. Hopkins, a state corrections employee for 30 years, was appointed warden of Vandalia in August 2003. He says the administration blames him for the failed effort to close Vandalia. "I don't know what I had to do with it," Hopkins says. "Their official position is I serve at the will of the governor and blah, blah, blah."

Hopkins and Foster were in appointed positions subject to the discretion of Illinois Department of Corrections Director Roger Walker. "These positions can be hired and dismissed at any time," says corrections spokeswoman Dede Short. "Those employees accepting these positions are aware of this when they're hired." Foster was with the department 24 years. He was appointed assistant warden a few months before Blagojevich took office, receiving a final salary of \$62,256. Hopkins was paid \$88,478 as Vandalia warden. The 55-year-old says he had planned to retire in December. "It's not the way to treat a career corrections employee who had an exemplary record," says state Sen. Frank Watson, that chamber's Republican leader, whose downstate district includes Vandalia.

Vandalia's new warden, **Steve Mensing**, makes \$71,280 and Foster's replacement, **Gregory Schwartz**, makes \$60,000. Both were appointed assistant wardens after Blagojevich took office.

Feds subpoena consultant's work records

A federal grand jury has subpoenaed the work records of **Ron Picur**, a University of Illinois at Chicago accounting professor who has earned more than \$280,000 for consulting work with Gov. Rod Blagojevich's budget office. "We have no idea what the nature of this inquiry is," says Becky Carroll, spokeswoman for the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. The subpoena requested payroll and expense records.

Picur assisted with the state's \$10 billion pension bond sale last year, which freed up \$2 billion in cash for operating expenses. He also has served as a consultant on general state budgeting. In addition to his faculty position, Picur had been a consulting partner at Filan, Pandolfi, Topolski & Weiss, the Chicago accounting and auditing firm **John Filan** left when he became Blagojevich's budget director.

For updated news see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>

Irving B. Harris

The Chicago businessman who put his wealth to work to build myriad children's welfare programs, died September 25. He was 94.

Harris, a Yale psychology graduate, became captivated in the 1960s by the notion that child development would be greatly affected by care received prior to school years. He helped create Project Head Start. And, over the years, he funded the Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development, the Ounce of Prevention Fund, a "laboratory" of programs to prevent family dysfunction, and other projects.

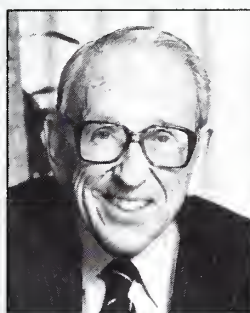
"He was in many ways a serious man," says Barbara Bowman, founding faculty member and former president of the Erikson Institute, which was founded through a gift from Harris. "Whenever he had an interest, he didn't just play along with the research." Harris would study a concept in depth, making contact with that field's leading experts. "He became almost professional in his knowledge. It wasn't ever a part-time interest; it was a burning interest."

Harris also helped create the Yale Child Studies Center and Zero to Three: The National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families and other initiatives. In 1996, Yale published his book, *Children in Jeopardy: Can We Break the Cycle of Poverty?*, in which he wrote, "I believe that God's gift of brain potential is not discriminatory. Kindergarten is much too late to worry if a child is ready to learn."

His charity extended to other areas, including the arts and public policy. The University of Chicago's graduate policy school carries his name — as does the Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater for Music and Dance in Chicago's new Millennium Park, which Harris established with his wife, Joan, who is a former commissioner for the city's cultural affairs.

In 1995, Harris was among 10 Illinoisans who received the *Illinois Issues* Award for Extraordinary Public Service.

Harris, a St. Paul, Minn., native who built his fortune when he and his brother, Neison, founded the Toni Home Permanent Co. in 1946 and then sold it two years later for \$20 million, explained his motivation for philanthropy to the *Chicago Tribune* a year ago. "Having money is a matter of luck, and I didn't have anything to do with it," said Harris, who also served as chair of Pittway Corp. and, until he hit 92, the Liberty Acorn mutual fund. "I had more money than I needed. So I decided I could either sit and observe it, or I could try to make a difference in a lot of kids' lives."



Irving B. Harris

New schools chief

Shortly after appointing seven new State Board of Education members, Gov. Rod Blagojevich named **Randy Dunn** of Chester as interim superintendent of schools to replace **Robert Schiller**.



Randy Dunn

Schiller resigned near the end of a leave of absence he took in September.

Dunn, a former kindergarten through 12th-grade teacher and faculty member at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, is on a one-year leave from his post as chairman of the university's department of education administration and higher education. Schiller, appointed state superintendent in August 2002, had a three-year contract. At his early exit, the board agreed to pay him \$157,500.

Schiller and Blagojevich began on a bad footing. A previous board named Schiller as Illinois schools chief shortly before Blagojevich's election. The governor lambasted the agency, calling it a "Soviet-style bureaucracy."

Blagojevich then got authority to replace seven members of the board. Once those new members were installed, Schiller put in his leave request and the board tapped Dunn.

U of C alums and ex-prof win Nobels in science and economics

Three University of Chicago alumni shared in 2004 Nobel Prizes for science and economics, bringing to 77 the number of U of C faculty members, students or researchers who are among the Nobel laureates. **Frank Wilczek**, a former U of C trustee and mathematics graduate, received the 2004 Nobel Prize in physics for work he did as a doctoral student at Princeton University. Wilczek, now in physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, shares the prize with David Gross of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and David Politzer of the California Institute of Technology. They shared the prize for a 1973 discovery about the phenomenon called "asymptotic

freedom in the theory of the strong interaction." U of C alumnus **Irwin Rose**, now at the University of California at Irvine, shared the prize in chemistry with Aaron Ciechanover and Avram Hershko of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa. Rose and the Israelis were honored for discovering the process of regulated protein degradation in cells. This finding could help researchers create drugs to treat such diseases as cervical cancer and cystic fibrosis. Former U of C professor **Edward Prescott** shared the prize for economics with Norwegian Finn Kydland for their theory that shocks play a greater role in disrupting the economy than demand fluctuations. Prescott, now at Arizona State University in Tempe, also taught at Northwestern University in Evanston.

For election information see the *Illinois Issues* Web site at <http://illinoisissues.uis.edu>



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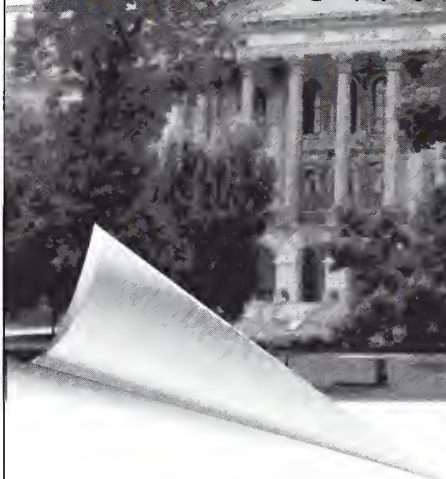


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Charles N. Wheeler III



Chicago-area mass transit leaders expected to make a long-shot request for cash

by Charles N. Wheeler III

After seeing colleagues in target legislative districts roasted throughout the just-concluded campaign season for supposedly voting against their constituents' local interests, Illinois lawmakers may be tempted to approach their work from a decidedly parochial perspective.

That's understandable, of course. No incumbent wants to provide ammunition to a future challenger intent on playing to the long-held regional animosities that characterize Illinois politics.

Downstate Democrats in particular are tired of being portrayed as lackeys of the Chicago political machine whenever they vote with the party's city-based leadership or for any proposal benefiting city interests.

So Chicago-area mass transit leaders probably should not expect a warm reception later this month when they come to Springfield to ask the legislature for an additional \$135 million in operating subsidies they say is needed to forestall deep service cuts.

Leading the Statehouse mission is the Chicago Transit Authority, whose officials say that without an infusion of \$82.5 million, the agency will be forced to reduce service by one-fifth come January to make ends meet in 2005.

Besides endorsing the CTA's request, the Regional Transportation Authority, which oversees mass transit in the Chicago area, also is seeking another \$35 million for Metra, the commuter

Meanwhile, the millions of Illinoisans who have never set foot on an L train or ridden a CTA bus might well wonder, why should we care about what's basically a Chicago problem?

rail service, and \$17 million more for Pace, the suburban bus system.

The funding plea already has met with predictable opposition from suburban and downstate political leaders. Some suburbanites don't trust the CTA's budget numbers and want its books examined by independent auditors. Others argue the agency is top-heavy with politically connected administrators and should cut patronage payrolls before asking for more dollars from taxpayers.

Lurking in the background is a suspicion that the CTA's current financial crisis is cover for a Chicago scheme to grab control of the RTA board and snatch money now earmarked for suburban transit needs.

Downstaters are on alert lest the mass transit folks finagle gasoline tax dollars

away from the state's road fund, further threatening highway construction projects already delayed because hundreds of millions of dollars have been siphoned off to pay general government costs.

Meanwhile, the millions of Illinoisans who have never set foot on an L train or ridden a CTA bus might well wonder, why should we care about what's basically a Chicago problem?

The short answer, of course, is that it's not just a Chicago problem, but one with potential statewide impact. The network of trains, buses and subways in north-eastern Illinois is a vital part of the region's infrastructure, essential to its economy. Almost 2 million people use mass transit in the six-county region each day, many of them on the way to and from work or school. Minus a fifth of the trains and buses and the passengers they carry, the Chicago area's legendary rush-hour traffic jams — already rated third-worst in the nation — would intensify on area roads and highways.

But mass transit benefits more than its riders and the drivers who don't have to compete with them on the region's clogged expressways. By offering an attractive alternative to the automobile, mass transit limits both gasoline use and vehicle-spawned air pollution. And noxious tailpipe emissions respect neither city limits nor county lines.

One can quibble with the fine print

in the CTA's budget plans — and an independent audit is not a bad idea — but the underlying financial pressures are undeniable. The two major funding sources for Chicago-area mass transit are farebox revenues and local sales taxes — the equivalent of 1 percent in Cook County and 1/4 percent in the five collar counties — have suffered during the current economic slump. High unemployment means fewer riders paying fares and fewer paychecks to purchase goods subject to the sales tax.

While revenues have been flat in recent years, and federal operating subsidies axed, expenses have risen steeply, especially for employee health care and workers' compensation. Energy costs also are up sharply and \$50-plus-a-barrel crude oil suggests a decline is not imminent.

CTA officials also cite the 21-year-old formula under which sales taxes collected in the six-county region are divided among the three service providers. The formula allocates to the CTA all the sales taxes collected in Chicago and 30 percent of the take in

Any sweeping revision of what was essentially a compromise between competing partisan and regional interests probably should be considered in the spring.

suburban Cook County. Metra gets 55 percent of the receipts from the Cook County suburbs and 70 percent from the collar counties, while Pace receives the remaining 15 percent from suburban Cook and 30 percent from the collars.

Changes in housing and shopping patterns over the last two decades have resulted in faster revenue growth for Metra than for the CTA, which city transit officials contend now receives less than 60 percent of regional funding despite carrying more than 80 percent of

the area's mass transit riders. They've argued for changing the allocation to reflect actual ridership and costs, rather than geography.

Any sweeping revision of what was essentially a compromise between competing partisan and regional interests probably should be considered in the spring, not during a limited fall session, although one might note parenthetically that both the 1973 legislation creating the RTA and the 1983 bill providing the sales-tax-linked subsidy passed in fall sessions.

But lawmakers would do well to set aside their provincial blinders to find some way to help the RTA and its service providers through their present budget problems, because a sound mass transit system in the Chicago area is important for all Illinoisans. □

Charles N. Wheeler III is director of the Public Affairs Reporting program at the University of Illinois at Springfield.

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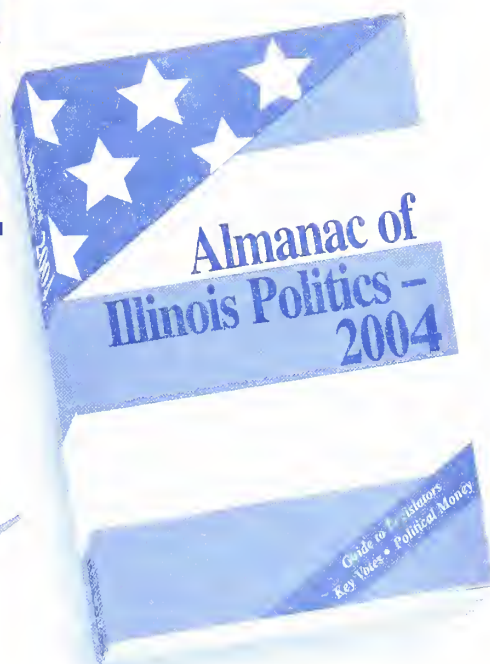
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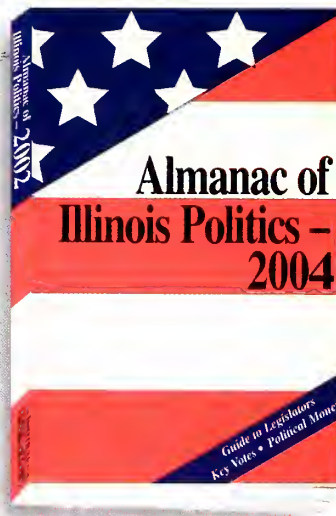
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